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[For information on the reminiscences of older informants about the African people and/or their ancestors who were brought over to the New World as slaves before the American Civil War, see Category 829.]

[For general information on the history of slavery and missionization in Georgia and South Carolina, see the NN23 Sea Islanders file, 3: Creel, Categories 17 and 175, pp. 67-109 and 113-251 passim.]

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[For the African origins of slaves on the Georgia and South Carolina coasts, see Category 175, pp. 29-44.]

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[For general background information on the history of slavery and missionization in Georgia and South Carolina, see Categories 175 and 17, pp. 67-109, and 113-251 *passim*.]

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121 packed clearing amid a grove of trees. Myers is slightly
115 stooped from rheumatism and wears two brass wires around
(757) his ankles to help relieve the pain in his legs. His African-born grandmother, Bina, "tell me how she get heah on a big boat an she lan down theah on Cumberland Ilun on a big dock." He tells the visitors how the slaveholders "broke"
(567) newly enslaved Africans by confining them in a log house,
chaining them to iron rings in the floor:

> They chained them wile Africans theah till they wuz tame. They'd take em out one by one and they'd give em a stick an put em in the fiel with people wut knowd how tuh wuk an that way they lun how too. They sked to give em a hoe. It's shahp and they might frail roun with it.

Look at his picture. A big, barefoot, very black man with a fringe of white beard, Jim Myers is a living link between Georgia and Africa.

121 FROM THEIR ENCOUNTERS with Katie Brown, Tony William Delegal, Henry Williams, and Jim Myers—and with 134 other people like them in twenty locations over a three-year period—the fieldworkers of the Savannah Unit of the Federal Writers Project fashioned a series of haunting portraits in words and pictures of coastal black Georgians. Their book, *Drums and Shadows*, is aimed at a general audience. It is organized by community and is presented in a straightforward narrative spiced with long quotations in a readable literary adaptation of the black Georgians' speech. It is filled with rich examples of Afro-American folklore.

128 *Drums and Shadows* presents much information on folk
speech and naming patterns, including the use of day names
and the folk etymology of Gullah. Here are examples of nu-
(192) merous African words used in coastal Georgia. Here is *deloe*

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115 One of the oldest of the residents is white-haired F. J. Jackson * who remembers his childhood days on "Massuh George Wiley plantation" when many freed Negroes stayed on to work in the cotton fields. Years have weakened his once sturdy frame and slowed down both thought and gesture, but the light of humor still gleams in his dimmed eyes. We found Jackson in the kitchen of his comfortable frame bungalow, a new house built to replace a little old shanty
[227] that was burned down. He was making a casting net, his twisted old fingers still deft with the cords. He conversed
[286] like one glad of congenial company.

"Does I membuh ole times?" he repeated in answer to our question. "Yes, I dohn git away frum dis place much now an uh jis sit roun an tink ub a long time ago. Deah wuzn no automobiles an duh only way tuh git tuh Savannah wuz by duh mule an caht aw git in duh road wid yuh foots. Not many uh duh people still livin wut come long wid me. Dey's bout gone. Me an ole man Bruurs Butluh's bout duh onlies ones lef uh duh fus settluhs.

115 "Yes, I membuhs duh plantation days. Massuh George wuz a slave dealuh fo duh waw, an he tuk us all, muh gran-
● 567 daddy, Lewis Hargray, an muh maw, an muh daddy—I name attuh him. Massuh George use tuh buy an sell but he wuz a good man an lot uh his slaves stay wid im on duh fahm attuh freedom. Dat big house in duh ben uh duh road wuz weah he lib, an dey still got duh ball an chain an duh banjo table in duh house now.

115 "Wen I lef duh fahm an moob tuh duh pint, ain but five wite families yuh. Ain no roadn nuttn, jis woods. I done a lot uh huntin an fishin. Deah wuz plenty uh deahs roun yuh.

"I use tuh go back tuh duh fahm on Satdy night fuh duh big times. Dey hab wut yuh call shouts. Wut kine uh
533 music did us hab?" Jackson's aged eyes twinkled. "We use

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534 * *F. J. Jackson, Grimball's Point. Deceased July, 1940.*

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WILMINGTON ISLAND

115 492 484 "We come in a wagon hitch up tuh a double team uh hawse. We pile ebryting in duh wagon, all duh pots and pans an beddn. Duh women ride in duh wagon an duh men trudge longside.

115 484 "It take us days an days tuh come frum Clinch County tuh yuh. We cross tree ribbuhs. We git tuh one ribbuh wut take us a half day tuh git obuh. Wen night come, we sleep in duh houses long duh road wut duh folks desuhted. I membuh one time we stay at a house wut dohn hab no flo. Jis walls an a roof. We put duh beddn right down on duh groun an sleep deah.

115 567 829 "We done sell tuh Mistuh Barnard. Yuh know duh Barnards, missus? Mis Barnard come outn a Barstow. Dey lib yuh, too. Well, wen we git tuh Wilmington Ilun, deah wuz jis a few houses on duh ilun. Deah wuz still some folks yuh wut hab come frum Africa. I recollect dat one gang uh slabes wuz brung frum Liberia. Dat wuz fo I git yuh. Duh las gang wuz brung attuh I git yuh an dey come ovuh frum Africa an dey stop an add tuh um at Santo Domingo.

"Yuhs heahd bout dat lot, ain't yuh? Big boat try tuh creep up duh Savannah Ribbuh, but dey chase um out tuh open sea an dey keep chasin um till wen dat boat git way an kin lan dem slabes, it way down tuh Jekyll Ilun. Den attuh dey git um deah, dey steal some ub um back an carry um up yuh tuh Hutchinson Ilun. I tink dasso, missus.

"I membuh doze Africans wen dey fus come couldn walk on duh groun bery good. Dey hab lill clumpy feet an dey ain weah no shoes needuh."

We asked if Uncle Robert had ever heard the Africans say how they had been captured and he nodded. "Yes'm, I heahs um talk bout dat many times. Dey say duh wite mens git um tuh come on ship an dey fool um wid all kine uh pretty tings. Den dey lock um in duh hatch an wen dey git out, dey way out on duh open sea."

538 "Spiduh stories mus be bad. Caahn git duh mens tuh tell um tuh dis day. Dey jis say dey ain know nuttn bout um. Dey ain want tuh tell um tuh duh ladies."

[115] Gene,* Uncle Jack's stalwart son, who had for the most part stood quietly at the fringe of the little group and had volunteered no information at all, now contributed, "Doze spiduh stories ain nuttn but duhty jokes. Dat's all dey is. Yuh call a duhty joke 'An Nancy story.' Ain no stories tuh tell duh ladies."[33]

789 567 829 A sudden silence followed and we asked if any of the group had heard of flying Africans. Uncle Jack's face brightened. "Long as I kin membuh, missus, I been heahin bout dat. Lots uh slabes wut wuz brung obuh frum Africa could fly. Deah wuz a crowd ub um wukin in duh fiel. Dey dohn lak it heah an dey tink dey go back tuh Africa. One by one dey fly up in duh eah an all fly off an gone back tuh Africa."

789 [115] As the old man was talking, the others nodded in agreement and mumbled that they too had heard of "folks wut could fly." Peter McQueen,** small and middle-aged, said, "Deah's folks wut kin fly eben now. Folks is alluz complainin bout bein rid by witches."[34]

754 There was again a murmur of agreement and we were able to catch snatches of conversation dealing with people in the neighborhood who had been ridden by witches.

Celia Small told us, "Dey's mosly folks yuh know. Jis change deah shape at night an come in duh house an ride yuh."[35]

"Now das sumpm reel," approved Uncle Robert. "I bin rid lots uh time by witches. Jis sit on yuh ches an ride yuh. Yuh wake up an feel lak yuh smudduhin. Ef yuh kin git duh succulation an tro um off, it all right."

775 776 The talk of witches suggested other apparitions and we

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* *Gene Tattnall, Wilmington Island.*
** *Peter McQueen, Wilmington Island.*

HARRIS NECK

829 "She come frum Africa an uh name wuz Patience Spauld-
173 ing," he began. "She tell me dat in Africa she use tuh eat
wile tings. I membuh she use tuh go out in duh woods roun
yuh an bring back some kine uh weed wut she cook. She call
it 'lam quato.' It look lak pokeberry tuh me.

"She say all duh people in Africa loves red. Das how dey
• [562] ketch um. I mean duh folks wut bring um yuh as slabes.
Dey put up a red clawt weah dey would see it. Wen dey git
close tuh duh boat, dey grab um an bring um yuh. She say
das duh way dey ketch huh.

"Wen muh gran pray, she kneel down on duh flo. She bow uh head down tree time an she say 'Ameen, Ameen, Ameen.'

829 "Muh gran say deah wuz lots uh cunjuh in Africa. Deah
wuz some men wut could make a pot bile widout fyuh an deah
173 wuz some wut could fly.[68, 69a] She tell me dat deah wuz
754 witches wut rode folks.[69] Dey could take off deah skins an
[789] hang um up an go out as cats.[68] Wen dey come back duh
nex mawnin, dey would put on duh skins. Deah is folks
roun heah tuhday wut says dey caahn sleep nights cuz duh
witches ride um.

775 "Folks say duh road tuh Maringo is hanted.[59] I use tuh
lib at Maringo some time back, but I nebuh did see no spirits.
Once I tink I see one. Wen I git closuh, it tun out tuh be a
big dog."[54]

115 Later that day we stopped at a neat whitewashed cottage
and talked for a while with Isaac Basden,* a blind basket-
285 maker[70a] about sixty years of age. The old man had learned
his trade during his youth before he had gone blind and now
supported himself comfortably in this manner.

We found him sitting in the front room, surrounded by
his work. A number of finished baskets were also in evidence.
285 They varied widely in size and shape and were all of the coil
type.[70b] Many were fanners, while there were also a number

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* *Isaac Basden, Harris Neck.*

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829 a misery in duh leg aw ahm, yuh kill a black chicken an split it open an slap it weah duh pain is an dat will cuo duh pain.

"She tell me dat in Africa she lib in a palmettuh house. She say dey kill animals wid a bow an arruh. Some dey use fuh food an some dey kill fuh skin. All duh people keep deah finguh nail long so dey could grab tings tuh eat off duh trees an bushes. Eben attuh she come tuh dis country, she keep uh nail long fuh a long time. Wen she staht cuttin um, she alluz bun duh pieces an she bun duh combins frum uh haiah too. She say it dangerous tuh let anybody git um. Dey make cunjuh gense yuh.[10] She say in Africa dey plant berries an pumpkin an dey had tuh plant um ebry seben yeahs or dey die.

"Friday wuz duh day she call huh prayuh day. Den she use tuh make bread. Wen she mix it up, she put duh dough in a wet bag an bake it in duh ashes.

"She tell me bout duh hahves time wen duh folks stay up all night an shout. At sun-up dey all sing an pray and say dey live bettuh an be mo tankful duh nex yeah." [38]

"Was your 'gran' grown up when she came from Africa?"

"No'm, she wuz jis a leedle ting. She say dat duh way
829 she happen tuh come frum Africa wuz dat dey wuzn use tuh
567 seein anyting red. One day dey see a boat wid a red piece uh clawt flyin on it. Wen dey go up close tuh see it, dey wuz caught. Huh mothuh, Theresa, wuz caught too an dey
829 wuz brought tuh dis country. Attuh dey bin yuh a wile, duh mothuh git to weah she caahn stan it an she wannuh go back
789 tuh Africa. One day muh gran Ryna wuz standin wid uh in duh fiel. Theresa tun roun—so—" here Rosa made two quick swings with her skirt. "She stretch uh ahms out—so —an rise right up an fly right back tuh Africa.[60a] Muh gran say she wuz standin right deah wen it happen. She alluz wish dat uh mothuh had teach uh how tuh fly. She try an try doin duh same way but she ain nebuh fly. She say she guess she jis wuzn bawn wid duh powuh."

Darien

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361 THE NEGROES OF THE DARIEN SECTION, MANY OF
whom live in small scattered communities outside the town,
186 are proud of their Darien ancestry. When the younger people
migrate to larger communities, it is a common thing to
hear them say proudly, "My people come frum Darien."

361 One of the most typical settlements is opposite the Todd
Grant Negro School. A few houses are clustered about the
[368] knoll facing the school building, and more dilapidated board
shacks are scattered over the little hill. At the top is Aunty
[342] Jane Lewis' cabin, surrounded by small sheds and fenced
[343] patches of ground where chickens and a goat are kept from
wandering too far. At the north a few cypress trees strag-
[351] gle off to the wood. A sturdy bush provides the sunny dry-
[415] ing ground for the gourds that later will be used as water
dippers.

[824] Aunty Jane * claims that she is one hundred and fifteen
115 years old, and to see the small bent woman with the deeply
lined black skin and filmy eyes is to believe her claim. Her
voice is high pitched, with the thin timbre of extreme age,
but she still moves with sudden agile gestures. During our
[535] conversation she hopped up from the steps and began to do
the Buzzard Lope [17] to illustrate her story.

115 "I belong tuh Robert Toodle wut lib in Nawt Calina an
he sole me down yuh wen Ise twenty-one. I ain membuh
567 much bout Nawt Calina but uh membuhs plenty bout duh ole
days yuh, cuz I bin yuh neah bout a hunnud yeahs. I be-

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* *Jane Lewis, Darien.*

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115 longs tuh Huger Barrett an Ise one uh duh bes fiel hans on
● 567 Picayune Plantation."

We interrupted the old woman's reminiscences about
764 plantation days to question her about funeral customs.

"We didn allus hab too much time fuh big fewnul in dem
[567] days cuz deah wuz wuk tuh be done an ef yuh ain do yuh
wuk, yuh git whipped. Lots uh time dey jis dig a hole in duh
groun an put duh body in it, but wenebuh we kin, we hab a
settin-up."

We asked Aunty Jane if they used to provide plenty of
food for the mourners.

[178] "Yes'm, dey sho did hab regluh feastes in dem days, but
tuhday, at mos settin-ups, yuh dohn git nuttn but coffee an
bread.[37b, c] Den dey would cook a regluh meal an dey would
kill a chicken in front uh duh doe, wring he neck an cook um
fuh duh feas.[35c] Den wen we all finish, we take wut victuals
[782] lef an put it in a dish by duh chimley an das fuh duh sperrit
[775] tuh hab a las good meal.[58] We cubbuh up duh dish an
deah's many a time Ise heah dat sperrit lif um. We ain
preach duh suhmon wen we bury um but we waits a wile so's
all duh relations kin come."

[777] "Is it bad luck to steal from a grave?" we wanted to know.

"Bad luck?" repeated Aunty Jane. "Sho it bad luck.
[782] Dem dishes an bottles wut put on duh grabe is fuh duh sperrit
an it ain fuh nobody tuh tech um.[64] Das fuh duh sperrit
[775] tuh feel at home.[47] Wen he die fah off, we bring um home
tuh bury um, dohn leh no strainjuh be bury wid um. Yuh
gib people wut ain belong tuh yuh anudduh piece uh groun
tuh be bury in.[3] We alluz hab two fewnul fuh duh pusson.
We hab duh regluh fewnul wen yuh die. Den once a yeah we
[769] hab one big preachin fuh ebrybody wut die dat yeah."[43]

Aunty Jane looked up slyly when we asked her if she be-
754 lieved in conjure.

"I ain belieb in um muhsef but deah's plenty wut do. Ise
had Ellen Hammond libin wid me. She die las yeah. She sho

535 point Aunty Jane rose to give us an exhibition of two dances, the Buzzard Lope and the Snake Hip.[17]

361 Across the highway from Aunty Jane's settlement, about one mile north of Darien, back of a turpentine still, is an irregular settlement of small houses, most of which are enclosed by high dilapidated paling fences. Here Wallace 115 Quarterman * occupied a cabin with his daughter, Abby Gibson. Wallace was old but with a clear mind, and he enjoyed a high standing in his community. We felt that he would know about the old beliefs and customs.

(361) (351) We left the highway on a narrow dirt road, little more than a path through the bush, and after much winding in and out we came upon a street of Negro cabins with their enclosed yards, vegetable patches, and tumbled down sheds. Wallace was sitting on the porch of Abby's house. Lizzie Sanders volunteered to be our guide and paid a visit to Wallace along with us.

We asked him how old he was and where he was born.

"Ise bawn July 14, 1844. Now figguh dat out fuh yuhsef, missus. Ise bawn at Sout Hampton, Libuty County, an • [567] I belong tuh Roswell King, but he done die long bout sometime in duh fifties an Ise sole fuh debt tuh Cunl Fred Waring on Skidaway Ilun. Ise bin bout fifteen wen I sen tuh Skidaway."

124 For a long time we had wanted to establish some connection with Skidaway Island that reached back before the War between the States. We questioned Wallace about the church on Skidaway.

796 "We sho did hab big time goin tuh chuch in doze days. Not many uh deze Nigguhs kin shout tuhday duh way us [534] could den. Yuh needs a drum fuh shoutin."

We asked if they shouted to a drum then.

534 533 "We sho did. We beat a drum at duh chuch an we beat a drum on duh way tuh duh grabeyahd tuh bury um. We

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764 * *Wallace Quarterman, Darien. Deceased autumn, 1938.*

533 534 764 walks in a long line moanin an we beats duh drum all duh way."[24]

We inquired about the making of drums and the kinds of 534 drums.

"We makes drums out uh sheep hide but we gottuh dry [237] um an stretch duh skin obuh. Some makes it out uh holluh lawgs wid skin obuh duh en an some ub um is as long as tree feet."[25]

We asked the old man if he remembered any slaves that 567 were real Africans.

829 "Sho I membuhs lots ub um. Ain I sees plenty ub um? I membuhs one boatload uh seben aw eight wut come down frum Savannah. Dat wuz jis a lill befo duh waw. Robbie McQueen wuz African an Katie an ole man Jacob King, dey's all African. I membuhs um all. Ole man King he lib till he ole, lib till I hep bury um. But yuh caann unduhstan much wut deze people say. Dey caahn unduhstan yo talk an you caahn unduhstan dey talk. Dey go 'quack, quack, quack,' jis as fas as a hawse kin run, an muh pa say, 'Ain no good tuh lissen tuh um.' Dey git long all right but yuh know dey wuz a lot ub um wut ain stay down yuh."

Did he mean the Ibos * on St. Simons who walked into the water?

"No, ma'am, I ain mean dem. Ain yuh heah bout um? Well, at dat time Mr. Blue he wuz duh obuhseeuh an Mr. Blue put um in duh fiel, but he couldn do nuttn wid um. Dey gabble, gabble, gabble, an nobody couldn unduhstan um an dey didn know how tuh wuk right. Mr. Blue he go down one mawnin wid a long whip fuh tuh whip um good."

"Mr. Blue was a hard overseer?" we asked.

567 "No, ma'am, he ain hahd, he jis caahn make um unduh-
829 stan. Dey's foolish actin. He got tuh whip um, Mr. Blue,
789 he ain hab no choice. Anyways, he whip um good an dey

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* *A group of slaves from the Ibo tribe refused to submit to slavery. Led by their chief and singing tribal songs, they walked into the water and were drowned at a point on Dunbar Creek later named Ebo (Ibo) Landing.*

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• 567 gits tuhgedduh an stick duh h[illegible] in duh fiel an den say
829 'quack, quack, quack,' an dey riz up in duh sky an tun hesef
789 intuh buzzuds an fly right back tuh Africa."[68b, 69c]

At this, we exclaimed and showed our astonishment.

"Wut, you ain heah bout um? Ebrybody know bout um. Dey sho lef duh hoe stannin in duh fiel an dey riz right up an fly right back tuh Africa."

Had Wallace actually seen this happen, we asked.

"No, ma'am, I ain seen um. I bin tuh Skidaway, but I knowd plenty wut did see um, plenty wut wuz right deah in duh fiel wid um an seen duh hoe wut dey lef stickin up attuh dey done fly way."

115 This story of the flying Africans seemed to be a familiar
one, for it was later repeated to us by William Rogers,* who
[789] lived about a mile from Darien on the Cowhorn Road. We
had been told that he had been a cabinet maker in his youth
[322] and still spent much of his spare time in the carving of a
variety of objects. The old man was evidently well known
in the vicinity, for upon inquiry neighbors quickly directed
us to his house.

Because a short time ago a fire had destroyed Rogers'
home and most of his possessions, we found him living in an
unfinished cottage which was as yet unpainted except for the
bluish-green trimming on all the window facings. In spite
of the apparent newness of the house, there was a pleasant
homelike atmosphere about it. Proof of Rogers' skill was
[322] demonstrated in scroll-work which decorated the porch and
in a cupboard and fine square chimney in the dining room
which the old man and his wife were building.

Rogers, who was seventy-two years old, was small of stature with copper-colored skin and alert black eyes. His manner was affable and friendly despite the fact that a recently suffered paralytic stroke had partially deprived him of the use of his hands. He told us that his grandmother had been

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* *William Rogers, Cowhorn Road, Darien.*

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115 Georgia but still retained many pleasant recollections of the days of her early youth. She had heard of many African customs and went on to tell us some of these.

829 "I heahd many time bout how in Africa wen a girl dohn ack jis lak dey should, dey drum uh out uh town. Dey jis beat duh drum, an call uh name on duh drum an duh drum say bout all duh tings she done.[26] Dey drum an mahch long an take duh girl right out uh town.

"Girls hab tuh be keahful den. Dey caahn be so triflin lak some ub em is now. In Africa dey gits punished. Sometime wen dey bin bad, dey put um on duh banjo. Dat wuz in dis country." 626

This being "put on duh banjo" was unintelligible to us and we asked for an explanation.

"Wen dey play dat night, dey sing bout dat girl an dey tell all bout uh. Das puttin uh on duh banjo. Den ebrybody know an dat girl sho bettuh change uh ways."

829 789 569 The story of flying Africans was a familiar one to the old woman and she said that her mother had often told her the following incident which was supposed to have taken place on a plantation during slavery times.

"Duh slabes wuz out in duh fiel wukin. All ub a sudden dey git tuhgedduh an staht tuh moob roun in a ring. Roun dey go fastuhnfastuh. Den one by one dey riz up an take wing an fly lak a bud.[68b, 68c] Duh obuhseeuh heah duh noise an he come out an he see duh slabes riz up in duh eah an fly back tuh Africa. He run an he ketch duh las one by duh foot jis as he wuz bout tuh fly off. I dohn know ef he wuz neah nuff tuh pull um back down an keep um frum goin off."

115 As we left, Priscilla accompanied us down the walk to the gateway. She was reluctant to see us go and until the last minute regaled us with a variety of stories.

We had learned that an elderly Negro named Lawrence Baker * lived out on the Ridge Road near the Ridgeway Club.

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* *Lawrence Baker, the Ridge Road, near Darien.*

795 during an ebb tide and Lawrence hastened to assure us,
783 "Yes'm, dey allus hole duh baptism on a high ebb tide. Das
so duh tide will carry duh sin out." [63]

551 Had the old man ever known any people who had been
named for the days of the week?

"I knowd one man name Fridy, one dat wuz name Satdy an anudduh he name wuz Toosdy. Guess dey name um dataway cuz dey wuz bawn on doze days." [20]

262 Baker told us that many people in the section refused to
eat certain foods, believing bad luck would follow if they ate
777 them.

"Deah's lots dataway now," he commented. "Lots uh folks dohn eat some food cuz ef dey did dey say it would bring bad luck on duh parents. Some dohn eat rice, some dohn eat egg, an some dohn eat chicken.[65]

829 "Muh gran, she Rachel Grant, she use tuh tell me bout lot
uh deze tings. I membuh she use tuh pray ebry day at sun-
782 rise, at middle day and den at sunset. She allus face duh
sun an wen she finish prayin she allus bow tuh duh sun. She
● 567 tell me bout duh slabes wut could fly too. Ef dey didn lak
829 it on duh plantation, dey jis take wing an fly right back tuh
789 Africa.

"Muh gran say dey use tuh eat wid oystuh shells. Use
412 um fuh spoons. Wen dey go tuh shoot duh gun, dey ketch
237 duh fyuh wid a rag an flint."

411 We asked him if he had ever heard of a hoe that worked
789 by itself and he told us that he had often heard this story
regarding the hoe [30] and that he had also heard many tales
about a magic rail splitting wood without anyone touching it.

825 Suddenly the quiet of the afternoon was shattered by a
high reed-like whistling sound. It continued for quite a
time, then stopped as abruptly as it had started. Was it a
person or an animal? It was impossible for us to tell.

"Das a spiduh, missus," Baker explained. "It come roun

115 row wooden gate opened into a field where a winding path
led to the small cabin of Julia Grovernor,* called Juno by
the island Negroes. Julia, very black, tall and gaunt, was
slightly hostile and suspicious and disinclined to talk. Even
[123] the pipe tobacco, potent in most cases, she indifferently
dropped.

"No'm, I ain know nuttn. Ise feeble-minded. I bin weak in head sence I small chile. No'm, I ain know nuttn bout witches. I ain know nuttn bout root doctuhs. No'm, I ain nebuh heah uh cunjuh. No'm, I ain know nuttn bout spells. No'm, I ain kin tuh Katie Brown."

115 This refusal to answer except in the negative seemed to
continue indefinitely. Finally, however, after innumerable
124 slow, quiet, good-humored questions that showed no resent-
ment at her hostility, she became friendly in a reserved and superior way. It was soon evident that this sullen, reticent woman, though hostile to outside invasion, was not feeble-minded, but on the contrary sharp-witted, with a dry sense of humor.

"Muh gran, she Hannah. Uncle Calina muh gran too;
829 dey bote Ibos. Yes'm, I membuh muh gran Hannah. She
marry Calina an hab twenny-one chillun. Yes'm, she tell us how she brung yuh.

"Hannah, she wid huh ahnt who wuz diggin peanuts in
829 duh fiel, wid uh baby strop on uh back. Out uh duh brush
567 two wite mens come an spit in huh ahnt eye. She blinded an
wen she wipe uh eye, duh wite mens done loose duh baby frum huh back, an took Hannah too. Dey led um intuh duh woods, weah deah wuz udduh chillun dey done ketched an tie up in sacks. Duh baby an Hannah wuz tie up in sacks lak duh udduhs an Hannah nebuh saw huh ahnt agen an nebuh saw duh baby agen. Wen she wuz let out uh duh sack, she wuz on boat an nebuh saw Africa agen."

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* *Julia Groverner, Sapelo Island. Deceased winter, 1938.*

115 A back path from Julia's house led to the house of her sister, Katie,* who had a regal and impressive bearing. She, too, had a hostile and taciturn manner.

"No'm, Ise younguh dan Juno. I dohn membuh nuttn uh doze times. No'm, I ain heah tell uh cunjuh. I dohn know bout witch doctuhs. I dohn know spells. No'm, I dohn know none uh dis yuh askin. Yes'm, I nuss Hannah an Calina wen deys ole, but I young chile, an I dohn membuh nuttn bout um. No'm, I cahn unnuhstan um; dey talks a funny talk. I cahn unnuhstan um."

In the afternoon we went to see Phoebe Gilbert,** another descendant of the Ibos, Calina and Hannah. Phoebe, black, buxom, and comely, lived in a comfortable cottage in Shell Hammock. Obviously embarrassed at being the center of a rapidly increasing crowd of Negro listeners, she evaded most questions. Our visit did not prove entirely unsatisfactory, however, for after considerable humorous chatting Phoebe rewarded our efforts by giving a vivid description of how her grandfather, Calina, was captured and brought here from Africa.

"Belali Smith muh gran. I ain know bout Belali
829 Mohomet. Yes'm, I membuh muh gran. She Hannah.
567 Yes'm, muh gran Calina, too. Dey's Ibos. Muh gran Calina tell me how he got heah. He say he playin on beach in Africa, an big boat neah duh beach. He say, duh mens on boat take down flag, an put up big piece uh red flannel, an all chillun dey git close tuh watuh edge tuh see flannel an see wut doin. Den duh mens comes off boat an ketch um, an wen duh ole folks come in frum duh fiels dey ain no chillun in village. Dey's all on boat. Den dey brings um yuh."

115 Cuffy [20a] Wilson,† sitting in the clean-swept yard which surrounded his whitewashed house, told us about the much-discussed experience of a neighbor of his. This dealt with

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* *Katie Grovernor, Sapelo Island.*
** *Phoebe Gilbert, Sapelo Island.*
† *Cuffy Wilson, Sapelo Island.*

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115 another Belali Mohomet descendant, who came to the door of his neat cottage clad in blue denim. Delighted to have visitors, Shad was eager for conversation. With a few polite (123) words of thanks for the pipe tobacco, he began to talk of the old days.

829 "Muh gran wuz Hestuh, Belali's daughtuh. She tell me Belali wuz coal black, wid duh small feechuhs we hab, an he wuz bery tall. She say Belali an all he fambly come on same ●(567) boat frum Africa. Belali hab plenty daughtuhs, Medina, Yaruba, Fatima, Bentoo, Hestuh, Magret, and Chaalut.

"Ole Belali Smith wuz muh uncle. His son wuz George Smith's gran. He wuz muh gran Hestuh's son an muh mudduh Sally's brudduh. Hestuh an all ub um sho pray on duh bead. Dey weah duh string uh beads on duh wais. (782) Sometime duh string on duh neck. Dey pray at sun-up and face duh sun on duh knees an bow tuh it tree times, kneelin on a lill mat."

We asked Shad if he had ever heard his grandmother say anything about Africa. Had she ever mentioned what sort of house they lived in or what food was generally eaten? Shad nodded eagerly, and from the steady flow of talk that followed it was evident that he had heard much of the land of his ancestors.

"Muh gran Hestuh say she kin membuh duh house she lib in in Africa. She say it wuz cubbuh wid palmettuh an grass fuh roof, an duh walls wuz made uh mud. Dey make duh walls by takin up hanfuls uh mud an puttin it on sumpm firm, sticks put crossways so. I membuh some pots and cups dat she hab made uh clay. She brung deze frum Africa. She membuh wut dey eat in Africa too. Dey eat yam an shuguh cane an peanut an bananas. Dey eat okra too. Yes'm, das right, dey calls it gumbo. Dey dohn hab tuh wuk hahd wid plantin deah. Jis go in woods an dig, an git big yam. Dey eat udduh roots too. Dey ain no flo tuh

754 "Yuh ain heah so much bout cunjuh on dis ilun, but deah's a few wut does a mighty lot uh talkin. Nellie Dixon, she lib right obuh deah in dem trees, she alluz talkin bout roots. She say somebody go tru duh yahd an drap a root fuhrum. She tote a sack roun uh neck tuh gahd um."[8, 12a, c, d]

115 When asked to whom he had belonged during slavery he
answered, "Muh fus massuh Montally. He ole massuh.
567 Young massuh wuz Massuh Tom Spalding. Den I belongs
tuh Mike Spalding; dat befo freedom. Sometime duh ole folks call duh missus 'madubu' an duh massuh 'mahaba.' Yes'm I bin big man wen freedom come."

527 Shad remembered that during his childhood he had often witnessed harvest festivals and dances.

"Hahves time dey hab big time. It come once a yeah an dey pray an dey sing all night long till duh fus cock crow. Den dey staht tuh dance an tuh bow tuh duh sun as it riz in duh sky. Dey dance roun in a succle an sing an shout. Sho is a big time.[38]

764 "Wen yuh hab a buryin, yuh alluz hab tuh ask leab tuh
duh grabeyahd. Dey do dat tuh dis day. Yuh say, 'Fam-
782 bly, please let us lay yuh brudduh in mudduh dus.' "[60]

764 The story which Cuffy Wilson had already told us about
Grant Johnson's having been chased from the graveyard by
313 a shadow was also verified from this source. Shad told us,
782 "Grant Johnson he go deah one time tuh cut wood widout
askin leab. He busy cuttin wood wen all ub a sudden he see
775 big black dog comin tuh um wid one paw raise an red eye an
big grinnin teet.[54] Grant he ain lose no time in gittin way. Dat dog wuz shadduh wut come attuh um.

"Duh ole folks use tuh tell dat story bout duh hoe wut
829 could wuk by itsef. It stan right up in duh fiel widout no-
789 body holdin tuh it.[39] Das ef yuh knowd how tuh wuk it.
Doze Africans knowd how tuh make dat hoe wuk an dey knowd how tuh wuk roots.

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829 “Doze folks could fly too. Dey tell me deah’s a lot ub um
789 wut wuz bring heah an dey ain much good. Duh massuh
wuz fixin tuh tie um up tuh whip um. Dey say, ‘Massuh,
567 yuh ain gwine lick me,’ an wid dat dey runs down tuh duh ribbuh. Duh obuhseeuh he sho tought he ketch um wen dey git tuh duh ribbuh. But fo he could git tuh um, dey riz up in duh eah an fly way. Dey fly right back tuh Africa. I tink dat happen on Butler Ilun.

825 “I use tuh heah lots ub animal stories, but it bin so long I mos fuhgit bout um. I ain heah much bout duh spiduh cep he is bery wicked an he shahp. He kin spin he tread an riz right up in duh eah widout nuttn tuh hep um. He see a fly an begin tuh spin roun an roun um till he ketch um in he web. Den he caahn git way an An Nancy got um. Das wut duh chillun say tuh dis day wen dey see a spiduh ketch a fly —An Nancy got um.’ ”[illegible]

346 On Sunday evening Julius drove us through black swamp and bush to the church at Silver Bluff (Plate XVIII).A The little white frame building with yellow light from oil lamps shining through the windows made the night suddenly come
794 alive. Negro men and boys were moving about outside in the darkness and a few were gathered on the steps. All the women and children were inside.

Escorted by Julius and a deacon we went into the church and took our places on the second from the front middle bench. The pulpit stood on the raised platform on which most of the light was concentrated. The men and boys came in. The church was filled with a tense quietness.

793 The preacher came from behind the platform and stood
794 silently behind the pulpit desk, looking dramatically over his congregation. He was tall and spare, with brown skin, narrow face, and a thin pointed beard, a Mohammedan looking
(292) Negro. He wore a black skull cap, which we learned later was not ritualistic but was worn to protect his head

A, [See Category 346, plate following p. xxxii-X--Analyst]

829 ain weah no cloze, he say, but a leedle clawt string roun em.

“William say dat dey ain hab much trouble gittin tings tuh eat in Africa cuz so much grow free. Dey cut duh tree an let duh suhrup drain out. Duh women tie duh leedle chillun an duh babies on tuh deah back tuh carry em roun.

829 “He say wen dey come in duh boats tuh ketch em, dey
trail a red flag an dey ain use tuh see red an das duh way dey
567 git duh load. William he talk funny talk. He hab funny wud fuh tings. I use tuh know some ub em, cuz he teach em tuh me but it so long, missus, Ise fuhgit. But I membuh he
(192) say pot call ‘sojo’ an watuh ‘deloe’ an he call fyuh ‘diffy.’ He sho did dat, but das all I kin membuh. Ef uh study bout em, maybe I kin membuh some mo.”

829 We wanted a description of William, the African.

“William a good size man, heaby set. He hab two leedle line mahk on he right cheek.”[14]

527 Ryna mused: “Tings is sho change. Wen we is young, we
534 use tuh hab big frolic an dance in a ring an shout tuh drum.
533 Sometime we hab rattle made out uh dry goad an we rattle em an make good music.”[23, 25]

535 We wondered if she, too, remembered the Buzzard Lope and she assured us, “Yes’m, sho I knows it. Ebrybody knows it.”[17]

754 Shortly afterward the conversation turned to conjure and
the old woman told us, “I sho heah plenty bout da ting. Way
789 back we hab plenty discussion bout root makuhs.[22, 48] I membuh my huzbun Hillard Johnson speak bout a root makuh in Darien wut make duh pot bile widout fyuh. My huzbun he frum Sapelo. He could tell yuh bout sech tings ef he wuz libin.”

115 A short distance away lived Charles Hunter,* whose small board house was set well back from the road. The front
(351) yard enclosed by a wire fence was planted with a profusion of brightly colored flowers along the sandy walk leading to

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* *Charles Hunter, Harrington, St. Simons Island.*

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115 (351) the house. Across the road to the left was a field which had been planted in corn.

Charles, a medium-sized, intelligent man, very black of skin and rather small-featured, talked to us about his people.

(165) "Dey is long libin people," he began. "Muh fathuh lib until he a hundud an muh mothuh wuz ninety wen she die. Muh gran, she name Louise an come frum Bahama Ilun.* She lib tuh hundud an fifteen. Das duh way dey do an I guess I'll do duh same."

178 Did the people around Harrington believe in the old customs the way his mother and grandmother had believed in them?

"Yes'm, dey sticks tuh em but duh times is changin an yuh
(764) hab tuh change wid em. Duh unduhtakuh come now an mone lakly he bring yuh back tuh duh chuch an dey ain no watch an singin."

795 In the course of our talk he told us that the river baptisms were held by members of the local churches. "Yes'm, we still baptize in duh ribbuh," Charles said. "We hab one not
(783) long ago. We hab tuh wait till a Sunday wen a ebb tide come at a good time, cuz it duh ebb tide wut carry yuh sin away."[68]

754 Charles confirmed what the other residents had told us regarding conjure.

"Well, dey's some belieb in cunjuh an some wut dohn.
(753) Dey's lots wut say sickness ain natchul an somebody put sumpm down fuh yuh.[15] I ain belieb in it much muhsef but
829 dey's curious tings happen. Now, wen I wuz a boy deah's a root makuh wut lib yuh name Alexanduh. He wuz African an he say he kin do any kine uh cunjuh wut kin be done an he kin cuo any kine uh disease.[48] He wuz a small man,
789 slim an bery black. Alexanduh say he could fly.[69b, 69c] He

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(567) * *A number of slaves accompanied their masters from the West Indies to this country. It was also the custom for slave ships to stop at the Bahamas en route to America with a cargo.*

115 could really be so old. We asked him who his people were and what he remembered about the old times.

567 "We belong tuh duh Coupers. Ise son tuh Belali. He wuz butluh tuh James Couper at Altama. I membuh we hab lots uh time tuh play wen we's chilluns." He smiled pleasantly at the memory.

829 This man, too, remembered native Africans he had known, for he told us, "I membuh lots uh Africans, but all ub em ain tame. But I knowd some ub em wut is tame an I knowd one tame Indian."

We asked again about old Alexander, the African root maker.

829 567 "Yes'm, I membuh him. He wuz a lill black man an he belong tuh duh Butlers but I ain know him well cuz we's diffunt people. Now ole man Okra an ole man Gibson an ole Israel, dey's African an dey belong tuh James Couper an das how I knows em. Dey tell us how dey lib in Africa. Dey laks tuh talk. It funny talk an it ain so easy tuh unnuhstan but yuh gits use tuh it. Dey say dey buil deah own camp deah an lib in it.

"Ole man Okra he say he wahn a place lak he hab in Africa so he buil im a hut. I membuh it well. It wuz bout twelve by foeteen feet an it hab dut flo an he buil duh side lak basket weave wid clay plastuh on it. It hab a flat roof wut he make frum bush an palmettuh an it hab one doe an no winduhs. But Massuh make im pull it down. He say he ain wahn no African hut on he place.

829 782 567 "Ole Israel he pray a lot wid a book he hab wut he hide, an he take a lill mat an he say he prayuhs on it. He pray wen duh sun go up an wen duh sun go down. Dey ain none but ole Israel wut pray on a mat. He hab he own mat. Now ole man Israel he hab shahp feechuh an a long pointed beahd, an he wuz bery tall. He alluz tie he head up in a wite clawt an seem he keep a lot uh clawt on han, fuh I membuh, yuh could see em hangin roun duh stable dryin."

829 Asked if he remembered any other Africans who tied their
• 567 heads up, the old man told us, "I membuh a ole uhmun name
Daphne. He didn tie he head up lak ole man Israel. He
weah loose wite veil on he head. He wuz shahp-feechuh too
an light uh complexion. He weah one ring in he eah fuh he
eyes.[27] I hab refrence to it bein some kine uh pruhtection
(782) tuh he eyes. Wen he pray, he bow two aw tree times in duh
middle uh duh prayuh."

535 We asked about the music they used to have and what they
used for dancing in the old days.

"We ain dance den duh way dey dances now. We dance
(533) roun in a succle an den we dances fuh prayin.[19a] I membuhs
we use tuh hab drums fuh music an we beat duh drum fuh
(534) dances.[23]

"Now, ole man Dembo he use tuh beat duh drum tuh duh
764 fewnul,[24] but Mr. Couper he stop dat. He say he dohn wahn
533 drums beatin roun duh dead. But I watch em hab a fewnul.
I gits behine duh bush an hide an watch an see wut dey does.
Dey go in a long pruhcession tuh duh buryin groun an dey
beat duh drums long duh way an dey submit duh body tuh
duh groun. Den dey dance roun in a ring an dey motion wid
(535) duh hans.[18] Dey sing duh body tuh duh grabe an den dey
let it down an den dey succle roun in duh dance.

567 "Dey ain hab no chuch in doze days an wen dey wannuh
pray, dey git behine duh house aw hide someweah an make a
782 great prayuh. Dey ain suppose tuh call on duh Lawd; dey
hadduh call on duh massuh an ef dey ain do dat, dey git
nine an tutty.

567 "Dey ain marry den duh way dey do now. Attuh slabery
dey hadduh remarry. Dey hab big baptizin in duh ribbuh
(585) lak dey do tuhday an dey dip em on duh ebb tuh wash duh
(795) sins away an duh preachuh he make a great prayuh tuh duh
(783) ribbuh.[63]

"Ole man Okra he a great un fuh buil drum.[25] He take
534 a calf skin an tan it an make duh side uh maple. Ise pretty

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534 sho it wuz maple. He stretch em obuh it good. It wuz bout eighteen inches wide an fifteen inches deep wen he finish it. He beat it wid a stick. Ole man Okra he sho kin chase a drum. Ole man Jesse he frum Africa, too, an he make he own drum."

829 When we asked Ben if he remembered any African words,
he replied, "I know dat deah wuz a ole man, it bin so long I
567 caahn relate his name, at duh plantation wut wehn roun wid
(192) ole man Okra an I membuh well he call all duh fish an ting
uh duh ribbuh by duh name uh 'nyana' an den I heah pancake call 'flim.' Muh granmothuh Hettie, duh mothuh uh muh mothuh Bella, he come from Africa too an he huzbun come frum Africa. He name wuz Alex Boyd. Alex wuz bery small felluh but heaby an he hab dahk skin an shahp-feechuch. Yes, ma'am, he talk African but he stuttuh so he dohn talk much roun us chillun, cuz we make fun at im, an as I say befo, I wuz small lad den. Alex wuz knock-kneed an he tie he head up in a clawt."

829 Had his grandmother, Hettie, ever talked to him about Africa, we wanted to know.

Ben told us, "Many time. He tell some tings I membuh. He say he mus be bout tutteen aw foeteen wen dey bring im frum Africa. He say deah wuz great talk bout comin tuh dis country an some men tell em it would take only two aw tree days tuh git deah. Dey wuz all happy tuh come. Him an lot uh friens come tuhgedduh.

"Wen Hettie fus come, he say he feel worried cuz he couldn unnuhstan duh talk yuh an many udduh tings bein so diffunt frum he own country. He hab two sistuhs an tree brothuhs but dey couldn git a chance tuh come. He hab mo refrence tuh he mothuh dan tuh he fathuh. An he say dat in Africa he lib in a 'groun house.' It wuz a squeah house, an he say dat he didn lib close tuh a salt ribbuh but weah deah wuz a lot uh wile swamp. Wen he fus come tuh dis country, he didn unnuhstan bout fish. But he tell a lot bout monkey

829 ple an dey all say dey plant duh crop an dey dohn hadduh
•(567) wuk it. I heah lot ub em tell how dey git obuh yuh. Dey
trap em on a boat wid a red flag."

Old Tom Floyd was not the only root doctor Floyd could
759 remember. There were many others, he said, some still living and plying their trade.[48]

"I knows a root makuh now," he told us. "Uncle Quawt, he root makuh. Does yuh know him?"

We replied that we had known Quarterman for some time but that he had never told us he could work roots.

"Maybe he ain tell yuh but he kin wuk em all right.[49] He
759 kin put a cunjuh on wid a goofa bag as good as anybody.
754 Now, I tell yuh bout im. Deah's two felluhs in Brunswick
789 wut does a lill killin an wen duh case is call, two buzzud
light on duh cote house an wen duh men come up befo duh
jedge, he let um go free. Now, Uncle Quawt, he had sumpm
tuh do wid dat. Dey ain so many root makuhs lef."

829 Floyd, too, had heard of Alexander, the old African root maker.

"Yes'm, Ise heahd much bout im. He wuz still libin wen I wuz a boy. Ise heahd em tell plenty uh tales bout im. Dey say duh boat leab fuh Savannah an Alexanduh he yuh. He say good-bye frum yuh an tell em tuh go on widout im but he say he see em deah an wen duh boat git tuh Savannah, Alexanduh he in Savannah on duh dock tuh ketch duh line."

Pleasant memories associated with the social activities of
534 the past caused Floyd to ponder abstractedly for a time.
535 Finally he roused himself and told us, "We use tuh dance
roun tuh a drum an a rattle goad. Dey could make good
drum frum hawg an bass drum frum cow.[23] Doze days dey
533 ain only beat duh drum fuh dancin; dey beat it on duh way
764 tuh duh grabe yahd.[24] Dat wuz fuh duh det mahch wen dey
use tuh carry duh body in a wagon. Dey hab lot uh singin
(795) den too an dey hab singin at duh baptizin. Den dey baptize
(796) em in duh ribbuh jis lak dey does now. Dey sing wid all duh
(783)

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533
795 candidates walkin in wite robes tuh duh ribbuh an duh
preachuh he dip em on duh ebb tide an he pray duh ribbuh
796 tuh take duh sin away.[63] Dey ain mine gittin wet in duh
783 ribbuh.

"Heahd bout duh Ibo's Landing? Das duh place weah
● 567 dey bring duh Ibos obuh in a slabe ship an wen dey git yuh,
829 dey ain lak it an so dey all staht singin an dey mahch right
down in duh ribbuh tuh mahch back tuh Africa, but dey ain
able tuh git deah. Dey gits drown."

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527 all gives praise fuh the good crop an then we shouts an sings
[535] all night.[36] An wen the sun rise, we stahts tuh dance. It ain
so long since they stop that back in the woods but these
young people they does new kines uh dances."

[535] Horace interjected here, "I seen em do those dances back
in the woods but not yuh."

We asked what sort of music they had for the dances.

535 "They mosly have guitah now," said Hettie, "an we use
534 tuh use guitah too, but we makes em frum goad an we beats
drums too. We makes em frum coon hide stretched ovuh
hoops.[35] Muh step-fathuh, Andrew King, who lived down
• 567 the Satilla Rivuh, use tuh tell me how it wuz in the ole days.
He tell me they bring a boatload of them Africans ovuh
frum a ilun tuh theah plantation. That wuz jis befo the
waw an they wuz runnin frum the Yankees."

262 We asked if she had known any families who refused to
eat certain kinds of food.

"Thas a hahd un, ma'am. Mos people eat wut they kin
git but I knowd Chahlotte Froman who wouldn tech chicken.
They all say that chicken wuz a duhty animal an they ain
(231) gonuh eat em.[66] They keeps chicken cuz frizzle chicken is
(825) a wise chicken. It sho kin fine wut you caahn fine."[13a]

We asked about conjure.

754 Horace laughed and said, "I tell yuh, ma'am, they's mo
178 doin of cunjuh up roun Savannah than theah is in these
pahts. I jis bin up theah an I ain nevuh heahd so much
talk of it in muh life. Theah's a lot of ole customs still roun
an we've all heahd bout em an knows bout em but theah ain
nobody much wut's ole nuff tuh pay much tention tuh em."
Horace smiled with the superiority of the younger generation.

115 Later we visited Henry Williams,* (Plate XIX), A whose
342 little house (Plate XX) B sat back in a clump of tall, overgrown brush that grew close to the dilapidated paling fence.

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* *Henry Williams, St. Marys.*

A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii-AA--Analyst]
B, [See Category 342, plate following p. xxxii-BB--Analyst]

115 Henry, who sat on his sunny porch, was strong and healthy looking for his eighty-seven years. The shabbiness of his clothes contrasted with the splendor of the naval cap on his head. Two little neighbors, Enoch and Artie Jones, were playing in the yard, (Plate XXI). A

When we told Henry that we wanted to know about old times, he launched into eager conversation.

"I belong tuh William Cole wut live at Oakland Plantation but it wunt long befo the waw an then I wuz free an come tuh town. Wen I wuz bout twelve, I hep Daddy Patty in his tannin yahd ovuh theah on the watuh by the cimiterry. Patty wuz a shoemakuh too an use tuh make all kines uh things out uh hides an skins."

We asked him to tell us all he could remember about Uncle Patty and his wife.

829 567 "Well, they's both frum Africa an as I remumbuh they's Ibos. They wuz bout middle height an heavy buil. I ain suttn bout Ahnt Rachel but Daddy Patty belong tuh ole man Arnow an I think he bought im at a sale an bring im down yuh. They use tuh talk tuh each othuh in a language wut we couldn unduhstan an Patty use tuh alluz be singin a song, 'a-shou-tu-goula.'

"Daddy Patty, he use tuh talk tuh the mens in the tannin yahd bout weah he come frum. He ain talk tuh me but I heah im. He say they ain hadduh plant but once a yeah cuz evrything grows wile. They buns gumbo fuh wood. He say they live in 'boo-boo-no' made out uh sticks an straw thas plastuhed with mud. Fus they digs a big flat celluh bout a foot deep an packs the earth down smooth an tight. Thas the flo. Then they leans the sticks tuh the centuh an they puts the straw an the mud on em an it come out lak a beehive an thas weah they lib.

"They buil a big 'boo-boo-no' fuh the chief. Patty he wuz the chief son an he have three straight mahks slantin down on he right cheek an that wuz a bran tuh show who he wuz.[14]

A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii--CC--Analyst]

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829 He wuz the waw chief son and doze mahks tell whut tribe he
567 belong tuh. Wen I knowd im, he stay down in a lill house
on the alley neah the ribbuh. I sho heahd im talk a lot. Ise
hole duh hide fuh im wen he scrapes em with a scrapuh.
Patty say all the people suppote the king by plantin cassaba
an givin the king some uh the cassaba."

535 We asked Uncle Henry about the dances and the customs
of long ago.

527 "I sho see dances wut give thanks fuh the crop [38] an we
567 prays in the night an dance wen the sun rise. I know the
Buzzud Lope too.[17] I seen em do that an they use tuh have
big Satdy night doins. Roun Christmas we git three days'
holiday an theah's plenty uh dances an shoutin then. We
goes tuh the ownuh an gits a ticket an we all gathuhs at the
same place an we shouts an kick up with each othuh, but wen
yuh ticket out, ef yuh dohn come back, the patrol will git
yuh an then yuh gits whipped."

We asked him about witch doctors and taboos.

789 "I tell yuh, missus, they ain many wut knows bout roots
787 yuh tuhday. Some does come tuh sell hans an chahms [6] an
they's a heap uh signs fuh the bad an good luck ef I have
time tuh study bout em. Now the Jordan family, ole man
262 Jordan, he dohn let none uh his family eat rabbit. Theah's
the ole man an Ahnt Tillah an theah chillun, Sally an
Austin. He use tuh tell the boy, 'Dohn yuh go shoot no
rabbits roun yuh; we dohn none of us eats rabbit. Thas
bad luck fuh us.' He sho wuz strick bout it." [65]

115 We questioned the old man further about his recollections
of the beliefs and practices of his ancestors. It appeared,
however, that for the present, his discourse had come to a
close.

After a moment's hesitation he answered us with, "I ain think bout doze ole days so much lately, miss, but wen uh gits tuh studyin bout em, lots uh things comes back tuh me."

342 sturdy oak stumps. The front steps were three oak logs of
increasing diameter that made a massive if difficult tread
to the door. The house was in a large grove of oak trees
351 and the usual plows, iron pots, and implements were scat-
tered about the hard packed, sand yard. Jim Myers owned
423 a good deal of land and there was a well-to-do feeling about
the whole place, though it was old-fashioned and isolated in
the extreme.

115 Uncle Jim * (Plate XXIII, XXIV) A came down the log
steps to greet us. His bare feet manipulated the round
treads easily. He was a big man, slightly bent from rheuma-
tism, very black with a white fringe of a beard. His eyes
[755] were rheumy with age. Around his ankles were two brass
wires, which helped to take the pain out of his legs.[12b]

"Uncle Jim," we said, "tell us about the times when you were a boy."

Uncle Jim laughed in condescending good humor. "Lawd, missus, thas so long ago I ain thought bout them days in a long time and theah ain much tuh tell. Ise bawn jis twenny mile from yuh on Mr. John Tompkins' plantation and I lived roun yuh all muh life. I bin heah on Mush Bluff Ilun a long time."

829 We asked him if he had known any Africans when he was
a young man.

567 "Yes'm, I sho knowd plenty of em. Theah wuz a lawg
house that belonged to Mr. Hallowes wich use tuh set right
ovuh theah in them woods until about ten yeahs ago. That
was the house that they kep the wile Africans in. It had
big ion rings in the flo. They chained them wile Africans
theah till they wuz tame. They'd take em out one by one
and they'd give em a stick an put em in the fiel with people
wut knowd how tuh wuk and that way they lun how too.
They sked to give em a hoe. It's shahp and they might frail
roun with it."

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* *Jim Myers, Mush Bluff Island.*

A, [See Category 142, plates following p. xxxii--EE and FF--Analyst]

775 We asked Uncle Jim if he could see spirits. "No'm, I ain nevuh seen em. I wuzn bawn with a caul [4] an I caahn see em. (845) Now, muh brothuh he kin see em cuz he wuz bawn with a caul. He see em all the time. Spirits is alluz roun in time 775 of fewnuls an wen a pusson die, we have a settin-up and then 764 we leave sumpm wut we got tuh eat in a dish by him to eat [54] —that is, we use tuh do that—an we put salt on em in the ole days an we go up to em an we put our hands on theah chest to bid em feahwell." [31]

764 We asked Uncle Jim if they used to have night funerals in the old days. "No'm, we alluz have our fewnuls in the day time but my great granmothuh, now, she say in Africa they have night fewnuls."

115 We asked him to tell us more of his African great grandmother.

"Muh great gran, huh name wuz Bina; thas all we know uh by. She brought up muh mothuh cuz muh gran got bun up in uh house wen muh mothuh wuz two days ole."

We asked him if he remembered her well. "Yes'm, I wuz a big boy about fifteen wen she die an they all say she wuz a hundud an thutty yeahs ole at that time. She sho ole, I know dat, but she remembuh plenty. She tell us chillun so much I caahn remembuh all them things."

829 We asked again about night funerals. "She jis say they have em at night but she didn say wy. She did say they 567 alluz kill a wite chicken at the time they go to bury em an they take the blood an feathuhs an they do sumpm special with em but I ain unduhstood how it is.[35a, b] I tell you wut she tell me, how she get heah on a big boat an she lan down theah on Cumberland Ilun on a big dock in the time of Mr. Nightingale an she say they put em in a lill pick house to keep em safe an the chimbly of that same lill house is standin about two hundud yahds out in the rivuh off Cumberland tuhday."

829 We asked if she had told him how they lived in Africa

1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

829 and what kind of house they lived in. "She ain speak of wut kine uh house but she do speak of monkeys. They have monkeys all roun em and they dohn have tuh do no plantin cuz evrything is wile and they pick it off the trees."

We asked him if he could remember any African words he had heard his grandmother use. "They wuz funny wuds," he laughed, "I ought tuh be able to remembuh em but I caahn. She use tuh sing songs with African wuds. Ef I could study about em, I might remembuh some but now you ask me I jis caahn git em tuh mine. She did sing a chuch song wut have wuds we could unduhstand, an then in the middle of it she say 'yeribum, yeribum, yeribum, by,' and looked like wen she come to the en of each stanza, she sing 'yeribum, yeribum, yeribum, by.' It sho is a long time ago, them days."

491 493 Later we followed a deeply rutted sand road which led westward in the direction of Folkston. Few cars traveled this way and once during our trip we encountered an old fashioned two-wheeled ox cart whose driver guided his oxen deftly to one side in order to let us pass.

115 • (567) About three or four miles out on the road we turned in a gate and drove to the side of Shadwick Rudolph's * house. The old man greeted us smilingly. At first glance he did not appear to be the eighty-six years he claimed, but on closer observation we noticed that his eyes were dimmed from age. He talked with us for some time, telling us among other things, "I belong tuh Mr. Dave Bailey. He own Woodbine Plantation. Muh granfathuh, his name wuz Jim. He come ovuh tuh this country frum Africa. He tell me that ovuh theah they have houses made of palmettuh.

829 "Then, ole Nanny Mammy, she live at the plantation too, and she come frum Africa. She alluz set down tuh wuk; no mattuh wut kine uh wuk, she set down tuh do it. Nanny Mammy use tuh set down in the middle of the flo of uh house

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* *Shadwick Rudolph, Folkston Road, near Woodbine.*

133 malaw, and Edisto islands to Beaufort; down past St. Helena, Hunting,
103 Fripp, and Parris islands; past Hilton Head and Daufuski to Savannah;
from Tybee, Wassaw, Ossabaw, and St. Catherines to Sapelo; past St.
Simons and Jekyll islands to Cumberland on the Georgia-Florida
border—the Sea Islands guard the coast. The coastline is intersected not
133 only by Winyah and Bull bays, Charleston Harbor, and St. Helena, Port
Royal, Sapelo, and St. Andrew sounds, but also by many lesser inlets
curling around the Sea Islands. Bounded on one side by the ocean and on
the other by the salt marsh, these Sea Islands use the energy of wind and
wave to build sand barriers that protect the mainland from storm and
surf.

The Sea Islands north of Charleston are often older beach resorts
131 such as Pawleys Island and the Isle of Palms. Their residents and vis-
177 itors are mainly white. Other islands are wildlife sanctuaries such as
the 31,000-acre Cape Romaine National Wildlife Refuge, the 20,000-
136 acre Tom Yawkee Wildlife Center on South Island, and the 17,000-
185 acre Belle W. Baruch research facilities on Hobcaw Barony. They
serve as home for such endangered species as the bald eagle, the East-
ern brown pelican, the short-nosed sturgeon, and the loggerhead turtle.
131 Many islands south of Charleston are populated entirely or primarily
by blacks, whose venerable folk culture and vivid creole language are
361 the subject of this book. On the coastal mainland adjacent to the Sea
Islands are black people who share that folk culture and that creole
language. While they are not—strictly speaking—Sea Islanders, in
many ways this book tells their story too.

For two centuries this coastal region has been the home of enslaved
175 Africans and their descendants. Theirs is a sad but inspiring story.
• 567 They built—in a very literal sense—the plantations, and they tilled the
rich fields of rice, indigo, or Sea Island cotton. Some of the slaves were brought to the Sea Islands by Barbadian planters who migrated to the Carolina colony in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a refuge from the overcrowding of Barbados. Many more were imported directly from Africa. By the American Revolution the slaves, from various parts of Africa and from various ethnic and linguistic groups, had already created a distinctive culture. During the Civil War, when white planter families fled the Sea Islands before the invading Union troops, Sea Island blacks began to cultivate the land for themselves. Hundreds of them joined the Union Army in the celebrated First South Carolina Volunteers. On January 16, 1865, General William Tecumseh

175 Sherman's famous Special Field Order No. 15 set aside for the former
567 slaves "the islands from Charleston south [and] the abandoned rice
fields along the rivers for thirty miles back from the sea." Within
175 weeks black homesteaders were happily farming their own plots on
423 Edisto, Wadmalaw, Johns, and James islands. By September, President
Andrew Johnson had nullified Sherman's order. Many freedmen were
dispossessed, but others tenaciously held on to their lands and passed
them on to their descendants. Some even managed to buy more land at
the end of the nineteenth century as whites again abandoned the islands
after years of feeble cotton prices and a series of killer hurricanes. For
361 the first half of the twentieth century blacks continued to be in the
majority on the Sea Islands, and land values continued to be low.

For generations the Sea Islanders lived under the same hot sun,
182 surrounded by the same sea and salt marsh, forming a barrier that
433 isolated them from the mainland. For generations fishermen flung their
nets into creeks and marshes and ocean for crabs, shrimp, and fish; and
they gathered oysters and clams. These supplied both local markets
and their own kitchens. For generations islanders cultivated their own
little plots of land. Farmers hoed the loamy soil of the islands to pro-
duce crops of beans, peas, and cotton. First there was the planting,
then the weeding, then the reaping. In the winter women sewed clothes
and made quilts; the men looked for work ashore. In the spring they
started the cycle over from the beginning—the planting, the weeding,
the reaping.

The years passed: the young grew old and the old died. And the
planting, seeding, and reaping, and the fishing, shrimping, and crab-
bing went on. And each spring the cycle started over again. Each year
was like the year before. Each generation was like the generation be-
fore. For generations there were the same prayers and the same hopes,
the same faith and the same fear, the same work and the same result.
[567] For generations there was the same old, hard legacy of slavery that
robbed men and women of their honor, a legacy visited upon the
children and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren, a legacy
against which honest hard work seemed useless, a legacy so old it took
its place among natural phenomena like the wind and the rain.

182 It was not an easy life; but it was a self-sufficient life adapted to the
environment, a life shaped by a rich folk culture. Cut off from the
[178] mainland, generations of Sea Islanders preserved their cultural heritage,
reflecting both continuity with Africa and creativity in the New World.

Demography

175 The Sea Islands were the homes of Indians before the Europeans and Africans came to America, and thus the region is [103] characterized by names like Wadmalaw, Sampit, Santee, Yamassee, Pee Dee, Winyah, Waccamaw, and Yacamaw. After the forced migration in the early 1700s of the Yamassee and other Indians, the coastal islands became the home of African slaves, a few white planters, and ex-slaves 175 and their free descendants.[10] Not many whites or Europeans inhabited the islands during the slave trade, and in some places white permanent 162 residents are still rare.[11] Federal census figures for the coastal areas 567 have until very recently shown high concentrations of African and African-American populations. For example, 1830 figures revealed an overwhelmingly black population. The Georgetown district of South Carolina at that time contained 1,940 whites and 18,000 blacks. A grand jury presentment held during the fall term of 1835 complained that the black-to-white ratio in Georgetown was becoming unwieldy and insisted that something had to be done. Noting that 10 masters of 1,700 slaves were permanently absent from their property, the jury went on to object that there were only 40 proprietors to oversee a black population of 15,000 on the Tide Swamp plantation.[12] On many of the islands the only white persons present were the owners, and in many cases there was no overseer.[13]

175 In 1798 the Georgia Constitution prohibited direct slave importation from Africa, and the Constitution of the United States made the 567 slave trade illegal after 1808. Nevertheless, the navigable ocean recesses of the islands and the turbulent rivers leading miles into the interior facilitated the landing of slaves brought directly from Africa. Slave trading thus continued to flourish in the coastal region as late as 1858, when the slave ship *Wanderer* brought new slaves to the Georgia coast. By this time inland parts of the United States were sufficiently supplied with generations of native-born African-Americans, so the coastal cities and the Sea Islands absorbed the newly arrived African [178] population. The continued addition of Africans to communities with few, if any, Europeans and an already dense African population made possible the reinforcement and perpetuation of African traditions in these areas.[14]

175 162 By 1880 the federal census revealed that Charleston County con-

464 177 there were 181 construction workers on their island, and 38 or 40 percent of those were black, although all did not come from the immediate area. In the area of operations employment, 111 of 250 total workers on Kiawah or 44 percent were from Johns, Wadmalaw, or Yonges in April of 1976. These are startup operations, but the same trends can be observed on Hilton Head Island. At the Hilton Head Company, 37 of the 103 workers are minorities, as compared to 40 percent local residents as employees for the local Holiday Inn.[19]

434 735 Despite these improved job opportunities, the Sea Islands remain among areas listed by the BCD Council of Governments as economically distressed. For example, Edisto Island had a 1970 median family income of about $2,500. Approximately 60 percent of Edisto's population reported incomes below the 1970 poverty level. Of the 2,024 residents on Wadmalaw Island, 1,053 had incomes below the poverty level; the median income for Wadmalaw was $4,700.[20]

735 464 871 The high poverty levels reported for the Sea Island areas are related not so much to the employment opportunities in the area as to a lack of skills that prevents the islanders from applying for well-paid jobs. In 1980 more than 50 percent of the respondents in one study undertaken on Wadmalaw, Johns, and James islands had less than a ninth-grade education (though there are many permanent inhabitants of the Sea Islands who hold university and professional degrees). Members of the labor force in 1980 were employed as unskilled private household workers, maintenance workers, clerks, food service workers, unskilled hospital personnel, and the like.[21]

423 175 •567 As noted, the agricultural patterns have changed over the years. When the Indians had been driven out of the islands, the land was owned partly by tenant black farmers and partly by white planters whose acreage was worked by African slaves. Immediately after the Civil War, only blacks could buy land in the region. Thousands of acres had been left by planters when they fled from the Union troops. They could not buy back the land because they could not pay the federal direct tax imposed by the Washington government, and even if they had been financially able to pay the taxes, they could not have made their way through the Union camps to do so. The federal government and various societies in the North wishing to befriend the blacks wanted the island property to go to the free slaves. To meet this inten-

226 fish they attract to the area. One has to be careful in this venture,
however, because the drums may also bring sharks.[31]

Though much sustenance is taken from the rivers, the streams, and
262 the ocean, another food source is provided by creatures that live at the
edge of the water, such as "cooters" (slider turtles), bullfrogs, terrapins,
alligators, and sometimes rattlesnakes (not everyone will eat
the latter because the flesh is believed to be poisonous if the snake was
angered before it was killed). The flesh from the cooter is particularly
pleasing to some islanders owing to its unusual taste and tender texture.
The alligator is a rare delicacy, now, being no longer as readily
[538] available as it was in the past. Yet Ber Gator[32] and his swampy home
continue to be lively topics in folklore and literature. Under the slave
225 regime, according to one source, when the islanders were denied the
use of guns and powder, they hunted the alligator armed only with a
•567 long hook. They entered his hole at low tide and, at considerable risk
to their lives and legs, dragged the alligator out and killed him quickly.
[262] The skin was saved to sell and the flesh taken home for cooking.[33]

000 This dangerous method of hunting alligators is reminiscent of an even more dangerous method once used to trap the giant boa constrictors and pythons in Nigeria. One Igbo hunter explained to me that the snake hunters rubbed their bodies with a scent taken from captured boa constrictors and pythons before entering places which they were known to inhabit, in order to prevent the snake from smelling their approach. Once the quarry's hole had been located, either the hunters dragged him out with a hook or, at greater risk, one man would insert a leg into the snake's hole, allowing the snake to swallow it up to the hip. When the leg was pulled out the snake came along helplessly, unable to move with the hunter's leg in his mouth. The hunter quickly drew his knife, slit the snake's jaws and throat, and thus recovered his leg. The account of this method of hunting was corroborated by some Nigerians and called a lie by others. The hunter who told me about it, however, swore that it was indeed done. Like the alligators in the United States, the giant snakes are captured in Nigeria chiefly for their hides. The larger the snake, the more dangerous his capture is, and thus the greater the price paid for his skin will be.

262 The woods provide a further excellent supply of food for the Sea
Islanders. Many of the more remote islands still abound with large
223 ducks, partridges, wild turkeys, geese, and many other edible birds.
224 Likewise, the woodlands are alive with game. Deer often roam alongside
the roads in the early morning.

764 be for that of an elderly person who had acquired many friends and
relatives over the years.

The Sea Island churches are the mainstay of the community and are
795 always full of life, vigor, and energy. Many of them have long and
illustrious histories. The Hebrew United Presbyterian Church on Johns
Island, for example, was organized in 1868 after the white Presbyterian
church no longer admitted blacks to worship at its services or
in its building. The blacks held services in a bush tent until a new
346 building could be put together out of lumber left on Seabrook and
795 Kiawah beaches by a shipwreck. At the time the island could be
reached only by boat, and according to the church historian, the organizing
members gathered the wood, put it on a raft, and floated it to the
construction site.

Brick Church, located on St. Helena Island, is a Baptist church
with an even longer history. It was constructed by slaves for their masters
[567] in 1855. In 1862 the slaves, who had been permitted to worship in
the balcony, took over the church when the white masters fled the island
during the Civil War. Before Penn School (the first normal industrial
[874] and agricultural school for the education of blacks in South Carolina)
was erected in 1864, the school's founder, Laura Towne, held
classes in this church. An elegant two-story structure, Brick Church
has been standing firm and serene for more than a century on the
grounds of what is now Penn School Center.[53]

The Sea Island church services are lively and enthusiastic. At a
796 good Baptist or African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Sunday morning
794 service, the singing and praising will be audible for many miles. If
there is a pianist, drummer, guitarist, or tambourinist, the service is
even more energetic. The musical instruments are secondary, however,
to the congregation's expressions of joy through handclapping, handshaking,
and general rocking and swaying. It is literally impossible to
attend these services and not be moved to participate actively. Even the
smallest child attempts to move in time to the beat of the songs. The
[793] rhythm is also a very important part of the sermons. The minister uses
many rhetorical devices to involve his congregation in the service,
[537] chief of which is the repetition of words and phrases at the beginning
and end of each statement (see Chapter 3). The parishioners are mesmerized
by the flow, rhythm, and steady recurrence of the repetitions,
and their responses keep the service alive and active.

113 surrounding area see Nichols, "Linguistic Change in Gullah"; and Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984).

4. BCD Council of Governments, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, 1979, p. 2.

5. Waccamaw Regional Planning and Development Council, *Waccamaw Regional Housing Element*, 1977, p. 8.

6. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 21.

491 [505] 7. The residents of Sandy Island have requested a bridge from the local government, but at this writing none is expected in the near future. At present all building materials, appliances, vehicles, and the like must be brought from the mainland by barge. And though residents enjoy the seclusion during the spring and summer, they complain—the children particularly—about being ferried across the river during the freezing rains that frequent the Carolina coast in winter.

113 8. For a discussion of the demographic characteristics of the Sea Island area see Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930); Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect;* Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); and Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1690 through the Stone Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974).

776 775 9. Many hags, ghosts, and spirits are thought to haunt these highways, and some islanders fear them much more than the alligators, wolves, rattlesnakes, and other creatures which may prowl along the swamp roads at night.

113 10. Merrill G. Christophersen, *Biography of an Island* (Fennimore, Wis.: Westburg Assoc., 1976).

162 11. Sandy Island, in Georgetown County, is inhabited entirely by African-Americans. However, some Sea Islands just north of Charleston and closer to the coast, such as Pawleys, Sullivans, and the Isle of Palms, are peopled primarily by whites.

113 12. Marina Wikramanayake, *A World in Shadow: The Free Black in Antebellum South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 158–59.

13. Jackson, Slaughter, and Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," p. 33.

113 •567 14. Frederic Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Baltimore: J. J. Furst Co., 1931), pp. 359–60. For further discussion of the slave trade in the Sea Island area see Georgia Writers Project, *Drums and Shadows* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973) p. xviii; Wood, *Black Majority;* and Joyner, *Down by the Riverside*.

113 15. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 19.

16. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, p. 14.

17. Ibid., p. 13.

18. Ibid., p. 18.

19. June Manning Thomas, "The Impact of Corporate Tourism on Gullah Blacks: Notes on Issues of Employment," *Phylon* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 4, 5.

20. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, pp. 13, 17.

21. Thomas, "Impact of Corporate Tourism," p. 6.

22. Quoted in Mason Crum, *Gullah: Negro Life in the Carolina Sea Islands* (Du-

113

31. See Cronise and Ward, *Cunnie Rabbit.*

32. See Finnegan, *Limba Stories;* and Cronise and Ward, *Cunnie Rabbit.*

33. See Harris, *Nights with Uncle Remus;* and Martha Warren Beckwith, *Jamaica Anansi Stories* (New York: American Folklore Society, 1924).

34. See Dorson, *African Folklore;* and Parsons, *Folklore of the Sea Islands.*

Chapter 4

101 175 567 [829]

1. On *Gullah* see Wood, *Black Majority,* p. 335. For *Geechee* see Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect,* p. 194. As many as 70 percent of the slaves brought to the Sea Islands may have come from Angola. As far back as 1822, the Charleston City Council regarded the word *Gullah* as a corruption of *Angola.* John G. Williams wrote in the *Charleston Sunday News,* 10 February 1895: "Gullah is very probably a corruption of Angola, shortened to Gola, a country of West Africa, and part of Lower Guinea, from which a great many negroes were brought to this country in the days of the slave trade. I remember hearing the old plantation negroes before the war speak of one as a 'Gullah nigger' and another as a 'Guinea nigger.'" When members of the Georgia Writers Project of 1940 asked an elderly man if he could remember any of the people brought over from Africa, he replied: "'Yas, I know heaps ub um. Deah wuz "Golla" John Wiley, "Golla" Jim Bayfield—he wuz bought by Mahse Charles Lamar, and he sole im to Mr. McMullen. Den deah wuz "Golla" Jack, "Golla" Tom, "Golla" Silvie, "Golla" Charles Carr. . . . All duh people wut come frum Africa aw obushseas wuz call "Golla," and dey talk wuz call "Golla" talk'" (*Drums and Shadows,* p. 66).

000 2. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect.*

823 3. Water is symbolic of life, happiness, and goodwill on the Sea Islands, and water from certain areas on the islands is felt to have curative properties. Thus Francis's reply is not without some merit.

197 113 4. For early studies on Gullah see George Phillip Krapp, "The English of the American Negro," *American Mercury* 2 (June 1924): 190–95; Reed Smith, *Gullah,* Bulletin of the University of South Carolina, no. 190 (Columbia: *University of South Carolina Press,* 1926); and H. L. Mencken, *The American Language: Supplement II* (New York: Knopf, 1942).

5. Ambrose E. Gonzales, *The Black Border* (Columbia, S.C.: The State Co., 1922), p. 10.

6. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect,* p. 296.

(114) 7. To take one interesting example of nonstandard speech, Ian Hancock has recently informed me that an African-Seminole variety of English is spoken in Oklahoma and Texas. This mixture is unsurprising: Africans and Indians have coexisted since the beginning of foreign migrations into America.

8. See Irma Cunningham, "A Syntactic Analysis of Sea Island Creole (Gullah)." (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan; 1970); Nichols, *Linguistic Change in Gullah;* Joyner, "Slave Folklife," or *Down by the Riverside,* pp. 196–224; and Jones-Jackson, "The Status of Gullah."

9. See DeCamp, "Toward a Generative Analysis."

Prologue

131 The coastal region of the South Carolina Lowcountry, bounded on the
north by Georgetown and on the south by Port Royal and St. Helena
Sound, was the land of the Gullah slave population. Bordering on these
coastal lowlands, stretching out into the arms of the sea, halfway be-
tween Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia are a fringe of
fertile islands. The largest of these islands are Port Royal, Paris, Ladies,
Hilton Head, and St. Helena.[1] Here indigo and the once famous long
248 staple cotton were cultivated by the most isolated Gullah slaves, who
249 also created and maintained a distinct, imaginative, and original African-
567 American culture. Because their isolation precluded direct exposure to
177 mass Euro-American influences, Sea Island Gullahs offer evidence of sig-
nificant combinations of traditional retentions, American acculturation,
178 and intergroup socialization.

101 The name "Gullah" is generally believed to be a shortened form of
Angola. Africans from the Kongo-Angola region, Bantu-speaking peo-
175 ples, were imported in large numbers during Carolina's early colonial
567 history.[2] As early as 1742, the *South Carolina Gazette* advertised for a
runaway slave called "Golla Harry." One of Denmark Vesey's cocon-
spirators, "Gullah Jack," was reportedly born in Angola. An entry of the
Charleston City Council for 1822 refers to "Gullah Jack" and his "Gullah
or Angola Negroes." The Vesey trial record, however, simply refers to
Jack as an African. Winifred Vass, in *The Bantu Speaking Heritage of the
United States*, points out that the ruler of the Mbundu nation in Central
Africa was called the Ngola, from which the Portuguese named the col-
ony. Vass suggests that this name was used by Europeans to refer to

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 17]

114 174 tribe in the Hamba basin of Angola."[7] Hence Turner allows for both possibilities in the origin of the term. Linguist P. E. Hair observes that, given this Gola association, it is curious that Turner found almost no Gola language terms. Hair has another insight. It is generally conceded that Turner may have exaggerated the amount of African influence in Gullah, but also that he "conclusively" demonstrated it had "more" 'Africanisms' than any other dialect in the United States. But, says Hair, it has gone unnoticed that "a remarkably large proportion of the 'Africanisms' cited by Turner came from the Sierre Leone region." Of the 3,500 words listed by Turner and used in Gullah, only 500 are "working vocabulary" terms with known meaning. Of the latter number, 350 are terms used in conversation. The Sierra Leone proportion is about 20 percent. Also, the shortest list is terms from Gullah stories, songs, and prayers. There are 85 such terms and 63 percent are Mende and 21 are Vai. Says Hair, "thus the Sierra Leone region makes virtually a clean sweep of this list."[8]

Of the 3,000 personal names with "suggested" derivations, Hair states that even here the Sierra Leone influence is prominent. He suggests that Turner missed other ethnic identifications of Windward Coast origin (Bullom, Limba, Kissi, and Gola for instance), because "no dictionary or informant was available."[9] This indicates a greater Upper Guinea influence than scholars have previously recognized. Most have concentrated on the Kongo-Angolan influence, as indeed from first appearances, does Lorenzo Turner.[10]

101 [567] African-American slaves who inhabited the Georgia coast were called Geechees, but had essentially the same culture as Gullahs. Linguistically speaking, Turner uses both terms interchangeably. He lists *gisi* as Mende and defines it as "a language and tribe of the Kissy country (Liberia)." Both Golas and Gizzis shared the same cultural institutions—Poro and Sande—as indeed did the Mende, Vai, Bullom, and others over a wide [578] geographical area. Today *Geechee* is a folk term, generally used as a provocation. In this context it means "country." The term is generally used between intimates in a joking manner, or intended as a challenge to fight.[11]

174 551 One final point on linguistic considerations regarding Gullah origins. Several Gullah personal names identified by Turner and listed with West African equivalents relate to Windward Coast secret societies. For example, Gullah *beri*, and *berimo* are listed as Vai. The former Gullah name refers to ". . . a branch of the society known as pora . . . a 'ceremonial

174 main, but other elements of religion and ritual were not. Sacred medicine in the form of conjuration and healing is one example. According to Thompson "Nowhere is Kongo-Angola influence on the New World more pronounced, more profound than in black traditional cemeteries in the South. The nature of the objects that decorate the graves there . . . reveals a strong continuity . . . a restatement of the Kongo notion of the tomb as a charm for the persistence of the spirit. . . ." Thompson notes the strong sense of communion with ancestors among Kongo peoples and manifestations of this retentive element in the New World. Additionally, the BaKongo concepts of "bad magic" play a significant role in New World attitudes toward the supernatural.[14] All of these elements were part of Kongo sacred traditions. Thus, a complex pattern of convergence of at least two African cultural regions developed in coastal Carolina, creating a socioreligious community among the Gullahs.

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567 Sea Island Gullahs received little attention in antebellum days. On the contrary, while as laborers they produced some of the world's finest cotton, Sea Island slavery was a very impersonal type of bondage. Most slaveholders did not directly oversee their plantations, nor live on the "unhealthy" Islands for more than a season. But the advent of civil conflict brought some immediate changes. Early in the war the Sea Island region was occupied by Northern forces, and widespread interest centered on these slaves whom the "aristocracy" left behind in their hasty flight. It was in the Sea Islands that the so-called "Port Royal experiment," supposedly a test of black initiative and valor, was tried.[15]

[797] Northern reaction to the Gullahs was mixed. Not all of the "missionaries" who embarked on the Sea Island enterprise were convinced that efforts at "uplifting" Gullahs would succeed. "It is the opinion of all who know the South," wrote Arthur Sumner of Cambridge, Mass., from St. Helena Island, "that the negroes of these Sea Islands are the most degraded slaves South of Dixie's Line . . . a meaner, more ungrateful and unhandsome lot than those of our district I pray that I shall never see."[16]

Undoubtedly Northerners such as Sumner were completely unprepared to find such "foreign" and "pure" blacks, who had an initial suspicion about the motives of white people no matter what their political affiliation. Yet other Northerners felt differently about the Gullahs and [197] grew to truly appreciate them. Their distinct form of speech was more than a separate dialect which linguists and folklorists later attempted to capture. To some whites, this language was a gifted, colorful, and picturesque form of expression, so original and peculiar to the Gullahs that it was beyond emulation. In 1863, David Thorpe, then a teacher on occupied St. Helena Island, wrote to his father-in-law, "Old John" Mooney, describing among other things, the force with which Gullahs used their limited vocabulary: 175 567 197

> If you ask a man how he came from any place, he will say, "I took my foot." If you ask him about any work he has on hand, when he is to do it, he says, "I will strike in on that tomorrow and fight on with him till I get him done, den drop back on the next thing them is."[17]

Gullah musical ability was noted even in antebellum years. None who visited and wrote about the Sea Islands before or during the Civil War failed to comment on the rhapsodic tunes which the Gullah boatmen sang as their oars maintained a graceful, timely rhythm when striking the waters. And perhaps no one, except Gullahs themselves, was more stirred by the melancholy beauty of their "prayer-songs" than the Methodist missionaries who, after 1830, went among them to proselytize. But even a Northern skeptic like Arthur Sumner was moved by the musical power the Gullahs displayed, as indicated by his sublime description of July 4, 1862, on St. Helena: 175 533 (797)

> We had a glorious celebration of the Fourth. All the negroes on this island were assembled, and marched in a melodious procession, bearing green branches, and singing "Roll, Jordan, Roll" down through the beautiful shady road by the old Episcopal Church. Around this picturesque building, in front of the platform they gathered in a great crowd under the moss-grown oaks, while our majestic gridiron waved above them. General Saxton and one or two others made brief remarks. The height of the festivities was music and dried herring.
>
> Oh, I wish you and all my friends could have heard these Africs sing! I never listened to more impressive music than this. The singing was intrinsicially good; the songs strange and beautiful and their swaying to and fro with the melody, seemed to have a sort of oceanic grandeur in it.[18]

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century brought a flurry of interest and writing related to the Gullahs which continued through the 1930s. Folklorists, linguists, anthropologists, musicologists, sociologists, and novelists began celebrating the Sea Island region as a quaint, mysterious, picturesque corner of America. Some of this literature remains useful. Most of the scholarship of the period badly needs placing in a more modern, sensitive perspective, because it is dated and full of the 114

175 patterns. These dual occurrences encouraged rapid settlement of the islands south of Charleston, and created labor demands that brought a resurgence of African importations, ushering in the second phase of the Carolina trade.

First was the geographical change of rice-producing areas. In the 1750s inland swamps, which since the 1720s had been utilized for rice cultivation, were gradually deserted in favor of tidal and river swamps. These were better suited for growing rice because soil was more fertile and irrigation was more easily conducted. This discovery opened the remaining coastal frontier to settlement. Workers were not only needed for rice cultivation but also to clear away dense woods and growth prior to planting. Memory of the Stono Rebellion notwithstanding, large-scale use of white labor was never seriously considered. Not only was such labor scarce and expensive, but tidal swamps were infested with malaria-carrying mosquitos, and the summers there were so hot and unhealthy that whites convinced themselves they could not endure such conditions.[12] Rather than relinquish dependency on African workers, South Carolinians altered their ethnic preferences.

The second factor responsible for renewed interest in forced black labor was the cultivation of indigo in the Sea Islands. Great Britain needed large quantities of indigo for its textile industry and encouraged indigo production in the colony. But despite the prospect of a guaranteed market, and even though indigo was found growing in a wild state in Caro-
175 lina, no commercial possibilities were realized until 1748. The change
249 was precipitated by a young Sea Island woman, Eliza Lucas (later Eliza
Lucas Pinckney), who from 1742 to 1744 engaged in a series of experi-
[247] ments. She crossbred and developed the plant through seed selection and
[386] from a West Indian indigo maker learned the difficult process of properly extracting dye from the plant. Indigo grew well in the Sea Islands and soon became the most favored commodity with the British government.
[556] Next to rice, indigo was also the most bountiful source of wealth in the province, laying the foundation for many Sea Island fortunes while further enriching British textile capitalists. Commodity output of rice and
175 indigo during this period of economic advancement was matched by heavy African importation. From 1740 to the eve of the War for Independence,
567 South Carolina imported over 50,000 Africans into the colony.[13] This middle period of the slave trade provided the Sea Island region with numerically dominant African ethnic groups who strongly impacted Gullah religious culture and communal organization.

175 Hence, the middle period of the slave trade to Carolina which corresponds to the last half of the eighteenth century, is significant for obtaining additional impressions of African provenance in the coastal and Sea Island region, since this time span corresponded with vigorous economic growth in those areas. Aside from records left by merchants and factors, advertisements in the *South Carolina Gazette*, which, beginning in 1732, is an almost unbroken newspaper file, provide information on the trade. Announcements such as the following from 1756 usually mentioned and frequently emphasized the origin of cargoes:

> To be Sold: on Wednesday . . . a cargo of fine Slaves just arrived in the ship St. Andrew . . . directly from the River Gambia [Wolof, Serer, Mandingo, etc.]; they are perfectly healthy, and have been so the whole passage.
> Negroes chiefly from the same country as those which are brought from the River Gambia . . . from the factory in Sierra Leone [Mende, Temne, Vai, etc.] on the Windward Coast of Guiney, where said cargo was picked out of a large parcel.[19]

In the early nineteenth century the South Carolina up-country engaged in large-scale production of short staple cotton, creating a renewed demand for slaves. This brought on the third and final phase of African trading, from 1804 to 1808. The Kongo-Angola area mainly supplied up-country plantations as well as plantations in other states that refused to import. Percentage-wise then, Bantu-speaking peoples apparently comprised the majority of Africans imported to South Carolina. Yet it has
175 generally gone unnoticed that Upper Guinea contributed heavily to the
slave populations of the Sea Islands and surrounding coast. Africans of
•567 Senegambia figured most prominently in the slave trade to South Carolina prior to and immediately after the War for Independence. Closely following in imports were those of the Windward Coast. Together these two regions' captured inhabitants comprised a large majority of Africans brought to South Carolina even if we make allowances for the fact that Angolan ships were sometimes larger and sometimes brought more Africans to America.[20]

Thus, the middle period of the slave trade represented expanded economic enterprise in the Sea Islands where indigo dominated, and in the hinterlands where rice was almost exclusively cultivated. Africans brought into these areas where chiefly ethnic groups of Upper Guinea and were victims of the "holy war" conducted by Moslem Mandinga, Susu, and Fula peoples.

171 791 guiding potential Christian converts through the "seekin' " experience just as Poro and Sande leaders conducted the neophytes through the "bush" experience.[25]

A second group of leaders worked on the periphery of Christianity. These "doctors" or "conjurers" were highly regarded by Africans and by African-Americans tied to their past while also creating a present. Some resembled the African specialists, in Kikongo the *nganga*, practitioners of *minkisi*. Yet others practiced *kindoki*, and brought evil. For if *Nzambi* and the ancestors set the limits of human possibility, and gave humans countermeasures against catastrophic forces, this influence was not always successful. The sorcerer *ndoki* brought chaos, disorder, sterilization of [954] nature, and even death. Hence we fine among the Gullahs the belief in conjuration and in witches of human form who brought evil via mystical [759] actions, and in root "doctors" and healers who worked for the forces of good.

•567 771 175 As Christianity crusaded through the slave quarters during the last generation bondage, another type of major leadership is identified as having a commanding influence upon the Gullahs. These plantation meeting house elders, chosen by whites, were the last group to develop. As spiritual parents, root doctors, and conjurers were a bridge between old and new traditions, with accentuation of the former, the "praise house watchmen" were the embodiment of creative forces that congealed past and present into something exceptional. But the new leadership, unlike the old, was probably more definitely in alignment with the new religion. Still black elders were pillars of strength in the slave quarters, and often above reproach among the members of the socioreligious communities.[26]

178 771 Association with African traditions obviously weakened, first in wake of new circumstances and later due to the power and appeal of the new religion. Yet while many elements of Africanity disappeared, other beliefs and customs took on new forms. Some features basic to traditional experience and thought outlived the capture, homeland enslavement, Middle Passage, and Protestant influence. African religious orientation was fundamental to early ethnic groups brought to the Sea Islands and 178 771 829 coastal Lowcountry. Additionally, in the process of community-building, a cosmology significant in traditional African societies formed another basis of the Gullah world view and spirituality. A sacred concept of reality and of the universe not only explained natural and supernatural phenomena for Africans, but fashioned notions about human relation-

171 roots, his foundation, his context of security, his kinships and the entire group of those who make him aware of his existence. To be without one of these corporate elements of life is to be out of the whole picture. Therefore, to be without religion amounts to a self-excommunication from the entire life of society.[28]

Viewed in this light, the power of Poro-Sande, of the ancestors, and of *minkisi* were key unifying socioreligious forces. Each was effective because of divine supernatural intervention which demanded individual and group propriety. God gave Upper Guinea peoples Poro-Sande, gave *minkisi* to the BaKongo, and transformed the ancestors into spiritual guardians. Hence God was not only a Supreme Spirit but a lawgiver as well. The supernatural existence of Poro-Sande was thus ordained and the pantheon of Poro-Sande spirits, through association with God, decreed laws, set standards, modes of behavior, worship, and customs. The "captured spirit" in each *nkisi* was incarnated power sent directly from *Nzambi* (similar perhaps to the Christian Holy Ghost). Ancestors were the emissaries of the withdrawn Supreme Deity. This idea of the remoteness of God, noted by writers and observers, is disputed by some recent African scholars. Still both sides of the debate acknowledge the presence of a Supreme Deity in African spiritual concepts, and that God had agents through which divine will was dispensed. This provided a linkage of spiritual virtue with communal responsibility. The attributes of God (discussed earlier), corresponded with characteristics of harmony and social order, the antithesis of bush living which was a wild, antisocial state
771 of consciousness. Similarly, Gullahs who accepted Christianity associated community socialization with religious piety. The laws of God were
57 synonomous with correct conduct toward other members of the slave
567 quarters. In maintaining this African socioreligious connection in the American ambiance, bondspeople operated on an internal logic that excluded planters, overseers, and even white Christian ministers. There was a parallel between the structural configuration of what became Gullah folk religion and composition of social order in the quarters. Thus in Gullah antebellum communities their interpretations of spirituality played a major role in attitudes toward collective accountability.[29]

171 African codes of ethics stemmed from spiritual orientation. Moral defects were considered spiritual flaws in traditional society and a blight on one's character. Individuals were expected to be guided by ethics characteristic of God, the ultimate source of moral order. Patriarchs, diviners, ancestors, and other spirits that one met in the sacred grove

lies in 1728. The first rector was Lewis Jones who served in that capacity 175
until 1745. Jones painted a bleak picture of life on the frontier. "The 797
inhabitants are mostly poor planters of corn, pease, rice and a good many of them living at a great distance from each other," he wrote in 1728. There were at that time sixty-two families in the parish, thirty-nine of whom were Anglican, twenty-one Presbyterian, one Independent, and one Anabaptist. At that time only 170 slaves lived in the entire parish, [567)●
and hence they were a minority, an atypical situation for early Carolina.[9]

The parish had no school although a few families had private teachers. 175
As for the Negro slaves, Jones admitted in 1728 that "no care" was taken 567
in Christianizing them. The reason, he cited, was due to their frequent removal to other areas, since Spaniards and Indians plagued the frontier, [797)
carrying away slaves. As a result, the number of St. Helena slaves decreased rather than increased from 224 in 1727 to 170 in 1728, while the [161)
entire colony's black population was over 20,000 in 1727.[10] Several possibilities may explain the disappearance of slaves. Spaniards provided a safety valve and chance for freedom. Indians may have done the same or may have simply attempted to decimate the white people's black labor force. Proximity to freedom and the paucity of whites must have intensified slaves' expectation of obtaining liberty. If later developments are any indication, slaves took advantage of these opportunities and the removal of slaves from the area represented white efforts to prevent this. The pattern continued until the Spanish and Indians were pushed back by the settlement of Georgia.

But the Sea Island region received early missionary attention for the 175
slaves from another Anglican source. Thomas Bray (1658–1729/30) was 567
the chief organizer of the three Anglican missionary efforts—the Society 797
for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), established in 1699, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), formed in 1701, and the Associates for Dr. Bray, established in 1723/24 and reorganized in 1729–30. Bray's first concern was Christianizing blacks and Indians. But he also shared, with Georgia founder James Oglethorpe, an interest in improving the lot of prisoners in England. With encouragement and financial support from high places, Bray and a group of sympathizers attempted to put a missionary plan into operation, hence the founding of Bray's Associates. Because Thomas Bray and a number 175
of Associates became involved in plans to found Georgia, it was determined that the southern missionary movement should begin near Savan-

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175 nah (since the Trustees did not initially intend to have slaves in Georgia). One Associate and Georgia Trustee wrote to John Wesley prior to the latter's departure for Georgia as a missionary to whites:

> One end for which we were associated was the conversion of Negro slaves. As yet nothing has been attempted in this way; but a door is opened, not far from home [i.e. Georgia]. The Purryburgers have purchased slaves; they act under our influence; and Mr. Oglethorpe will think it advisable to begin there.[11]

Thomas Bray did not live to see Oglethorpe settle Georgia or to witness the missionary attempt among South Carolina slaves. But he and his Associates were instrumental in bringing about one endeavor to Christianize slaves in South Carolina.[12]

A colony of Swiss Protestant refugees, led by Jean Pierre Purry, settled on the southern frontier on the north bank of the Savannah River in 1731. This was about 20 miles from where Savannah, Georgia, would be located in 1733. Two Moravian missionaries, commissioned by the Associates to instruct slaves in Purrysburg, arrived there in 1739. The missionary venture failed. Few blacks were in the area, and one missionary became ill and died within six months. The other sailed for Philadelphia the following year. But an even more significant note on the ill-fated nature of the plan was the fact that these missionaries apparently could not even speak English. Yet this early activity and interest in slave conversion in the South Carolina and Georgia Sea Island region set the stage for future developments. The Georgia Trustees' alteration of their brief policy of slavery exclusion in the colony, the proximity of the two colonies, and the Trustees' early concern for religious instruction made the Sea Island region fruitful territory for the evangelism of George Whitefield during the Great Awakening. These early associations also perhaps laid the foundation for later acceptance of black independent churches at a time when such institutions were forbidden elsewhere. Georgia's evangelistic fervor and liberalism spilled over into the South Carolina slave population in the Sea Island region.[13]

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Lewis Jones remained at St. Helena until his death in 1745 and his main concern as rector was with white communicants. In 1736 he complained to the Society that despite his endeavors he had only been allowed to baptize one black and one mulatto slave. Bringing Christianity to slaves in St. Helena was discouraging work. Writing to the Secretary in England he stated that "the pious zeal of the venerable Society, and of its worthy Diocesan for promoting Christian knowledge among the Negroes meets with but a cold reception." This attitude was further strengthened by the 1739 Stono Rebellion. From St. Helena Lewis Jones lamented the fact that twenty-three "much indulged" slaves from his parish had joined the rebellion.[14] 175 557 797

But St. Helena witnessed some spiritual awakening. Whitefield preached there in 1739 and convinced a few whites to instruct slaves in Christianity. Whitefield however was not popular with the Anglican hierarchy. Unbeknownst to Lewis Jones, Whitefield had been censored by Commissary Alexander Garden in Charleston, and the latter was outraged upon learning that the outspoken evangelist was preaching in the Anglican Church at St. Helena. Further problems were created for Jones by one of Whitefield's St. Helena disciples, a planter named Hugh Bryan. Bryan, considered a mystic and an eccentric, preached to his slaves and reportedly openly predicted they would rebel and obtain their freedom.[15]

Like sister parishes, St. Helena suffered from problems of white communicants with only marginal interest in spiritual matters. Jones complained that duly elected vestrymen refused to serve even after accepting appointments. Church attendance was also poor. Jones suggested Sunday worship be held only once in five weeks. But even these infrequent services were poorly attended with the total numbers of communicants usually not exceeding twenty. Still, the long tenure of Lewis Jones brought an added stability and consistency for the Church of England on the frontier and it remained the dominant denomination throughout the colonial era. After Jones' death, ministers came and went in rapid succession. As the parish grew in economic enterprise through cultivation of indigo, a demand for slaves gave St. Helena a new significance. Yet, except for short-term effects of the Great Awakening, Anglicans in the Sea Island region remained aloof toward spiritual enthusiasm for themselves and their burgeoning African-born black population.[16]

Pecuniary interest and spiritual indifference were not the only factors that generated hostility and a "cold reception" from planters. The element of sheer physical self-preservation cannot be discounted as a reason for planter resistance. They were spread out on the frontier, surrounded by a predominantly hostile population—namely West Africans and Indians—and were in the process of exploiting both through bondage and unfair trade practices. Whites had every reason to fear of slave insurrec- 175

Sunday as a day of pleasure. Certainly, it was difficult to convince slaves 175 that they should be more exemplary than their masters. These early Carolinians were described as a boisterous lot, frequently engaging in "cursing, swearing, drinking and gaming and barbarous misuse of their Negroes." For ministers and missionaries then, there was the double obstacle of combatting "the strong prejudices" of Africans "grown in years," and "the backwardness of masters."[46]

Not all masters were "backward." Some, such as Hugh Bryan, were atypical in that instead of depriving slaves of Christianity, it was sometimes forced upon them. Bryan was accused of inciting the St. Helena [669] slaves to revolt in 1741, when he was probably just attempting to pro- [567] vide religious instruction. His utterances may have generated some discontent among the slaves since he counseled in words similar to those used by Whitefield in his letter to slaveholders. But Whitefield was speaking to masters not to slaves. As ill-advised and eccentric as Hugh Bryan's statements may have been, he was a planter, and as his letter of apology reaffirmed, was in sympathy with the planter cause. He soon settled down to a less public life. But his diary and letters indicate that the spiritual welfare of his slaves was a continual concern. Still, he seems to have been no more successful in creating a change of heart among his bondspeople than he was in mastering his own sense of sin and guilt. Some slaves were baptized and admitted into the Stoney Creek Church, as demonstrated by the church register. Their numbers were small, probably household servants. And, slaves were listed only for baptism, while the baptism, marriage, and burial of whites was recorded.[47]

Of course, church lists do not tell the whole story. And while few slaves cared to convince the Stoney Creek white membership that they had a "true experience," some probably had to listen to sermons and instruction in their "duty." Certainly Bryan's slaves were rarely deleted from his fervent prayers. He found them inattentive and continued to pray for them. "My servants were called to prayers, but none came," he wrote on one occasion. On another he wrote of it being "a time of trial and uneasiness from the disobedience of servants. . . ." Thus the slaves heard but did not listen and Bryan's frustrations for his soul and theirs seemed to weigh heavy on his heart.[48]

It was a strange relationship between master and slaves. Bryan seemed sincere although his own spiritual enthusiasm was often mixed with periods of gay indulgence and the conviviality so common among individ-

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17 ers, for a number of years. Many either brought their children with them or formed partnerships after flights, giving birth to children behind British lines, that is, born free. The existence of this "Book of Negroes," with large numbers of South Carolina slaves on the lists, refutes claims that the War for Independence little affected the black population in the Lowcountry. Also, the lists demonstrate bondspeople's sense of autonomy in familial matters, and what E. P. Thompson, in another context, characterizes as representing "symbolic authority." Many did not give the surname of their masters as their own, making their detachments from previous status as complete as possible.[13] Furthermore, we find few African names on the inspection lists. Except for an occasional Cudjo or Mingo, most slaves have English names. Perhaps this represents a demarcation line between those slaves who decided to cast their lot with the British and less assimilated, African-born slaves, who remained in the swamps and woods of coastal Carolina and Georgia, becoming part of the groups that plagued the region after the War for Independence.

Among those who took refuge with the British in New York was Boston King. Although King was the son of favored slaves on the Waring ● [567] plantations in the Sea Island region, this was not a mitigating factor in his bondage. He was apprenticed to a carpenter at sixteen who was a cruel man, and King "suffered many hardships." On one occasion he was falsely accused of stealing nails. "For this offense," wrote King, "I was beat and tortured most cruelly, and was laid up three weeks before I was able to do any work." King's owner's objections and his threats to break the apprentice agreement led to fairer treatment for a time. But another incident occurred for which the young man anticipated "severest punishment." It was 1780, and the war between Britain and the colonies provided the safety valve King needed. Though "much grieved at first," to reside among strangers, King nevertheless "determined to go to Charles-Town and throw myself into the hands of the English," who received him "readily."[14]

For the first time Boston King "began to feel the happiness of liberty." Despite many dangerous exploits that year, as well as a bout with smallpox, King managed to stay in British service and joined the crew of a man-of-war bound for New York in 1781. His adventures and hardships continued, culminating in capture by Americans while serving on a British pilot boat. King was taken to New Brunswick, and though well-treated, he longed for the freedom he had briefly known with the Brit-

of the cotton gin. On the Sea Islands indigo planters marked time and 175
clung to their slaves, although their new relationship with Great Britain (567)
cut off their monopoly of indigo profits. Shortly, a new commodity, sea island cotton, proved to be a vastly profitable substitute for indigo. There was never a question as to whether or not slavery would survive in South Carolina and Georgia.[18]

Postwar South Carolina settled back into a system of slavery which was unbending in its oppression. Signs of brutality and harshness were clearly visible. One 1785 traveler was awestruck by the natural beauty of the state, but also mused on how quickly "heaven's best gifts" were forgotten, "as well as the bountiful giver." Upon visiting a structure jocosely referred to as the "sugar house," the observer was repulsed by what he saw. Here Charleston slaves were punished. The place contained "dreadful machinery" on which slaves were confined and suspended. "I marked the scourge which was tinged with human blood and other apparatus of more than savage barbarity." More revolting than the "machinery" said the observer, was the "viewing bench" designed for "such spectators as chose to regale themselves with a view of the agony of suffering humanity." How was it possible, wondered the traveler, that "a people who have just risen up from the struggles of virtue and liberty should be so insensible of their inestimable blessings . . . as to consign to sining and dispair creatures like themselves and to triumph in their
destress." Another example comes from Georgia. Philadelphia physician 175
Benjamin Rush noted that on the Sea Island plantations of Pierce Butler, 567
the overseer, Mr. Mitchell, whipped slaves "til they laughed."—"Pain," (152)
said Rush, "changed to pleasure."[19]

Whatever mechanisms of escapism prompted this "hysterical" reaction to whipping, it is doubtful that pain was turning to pleasure as the usually sensitive Dr. Rush believed. But the statement represents more than an ignorant comment about an oppressive system, since the incident took place on a Butler plantation. This latter fact demonstrates the limitations inherent in viewing bondage from what may seem to be a redeeming ideology—paternalism. While Butler himself can probably be considered as close to any planter in representing "paternalism," this only reveals the inadequacy of the term in describing master-slave relationships. He was known for buying slaves in family units and for trying to keep them together on his plantations. He was also remembered by his old house slaves for having been a caring master. But Butler was often absent, and

175 with an eye toward profit to support his elegant Philadelphia life-style, 567 he hired hard-driving overseers and gave them free reign in his absence. His heirs continued to manage the estates in this way, and just before the Civil War, many "faithful" Butler slaves were sold to maintain that life-style.[20]

175 The postwar runaway situation among the slaves in the country and cities created alarm. In rural areas maroon groups were strengthened by the war with Britain. Slaves who aided the British in the siege of Savannah fled after their allies lost the war and maroons lost their hope of freedom. After the war, campaigns against maroons were conducted by the South Carolina and Georgia militias. The situation was discussed in both states' legislative bodies. Major Pierce Butler frequently expressed anxiety over maroon groups, and in 1789 noted that his island plantations were threatened from two sources—Indians and groups of runaway slaves, both of which were aided by the Spanish. It was, he wrote, "such an alarming and serious a nature as to threaten . . . ruin and depopulation unless timely protected by Congress." He proposed making war on the Creeks, taking Florida from the Spanish, and sending federal troops to combat slave maroon problems. He and other elected officials from his region "sounded" the new national Congress on the issue. But the new government was too engaged in more "pressing" business. These groups of fugitives, sometimes aided by the Spanish, remained part of the Lowcountry landscape even in the vicinity of Charleston. Some could be linked to the wartime period. In one 1786 account a militia expedition attacked a band of about one hundred fugitives who had sheltered on "Belleisle Island, about 17 or 18 miles up Savannah River." The band had boldly committed robberies on neighboring plantations. The first attempt to dislodge the group failed although several fugitives were killed, and four whites wounded. That same evening the whites were reinforced and continued their assault, "but the Negroes came down in such numbers" that it was decided to return to the boats. The fugitives attempted to cut off this route, "but were prevented by Lieutenant Elfe of the artillery," whose company discharged grape shot, killing or wounding several as evidenced by the amount of blood seen afterwards in the place where the shot was aimed. Several days later, after the fugitives had abandoned the scene, "General Jackson" went to the Island and destroyed the provisions, canoes, and boats. He also burned their homes

and fields where rice was being cultivated. It was generally expected that 175 deprivation of food and shelter would "occasion them to disperse about the country, and it is hoped will be the means of most of them being soon taken up."[21]

Discontented slaves engaged in various forms of violence against the white community in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In the city the most common act of resistance was setting fires. Numerous cases of arson were reported, and in 1797 three slaves were executed and two banished for attempting to burn Charleston. As historians who recognize the character of the African-American struggle have noted, the year 1800 was momentous. Gabriel's aborted uprising in Richmond, Virginia corresponded in time with the date of Denmark Vesey's purchase of freedom and Nat Turner's birth. Gabriel's attempt in 1800 may have inspired two failed South Carolina efforts later that same year. In September plantation slaves rebelled, killing several whites. Troops were ordered out but the insurgents held their ground for some time in the swamp regions before capture. Later in the year another outbreak began but was quickly dispersed. In 1804 in the Sea Island region south of 175 Charleston, there was "a rumor afloat" that all slaves in the area were 567• planning a revolt. Whites began taking guns to bed. The rumor was reportedly true and whites were saved by a slave informant just before 669 the outbreak. The leaders were seized, quickly tried, and "ten or a dozen" condemned to death. Following execution, the slaves' "heads were cut off, stuck on poles, and set up along the highway, from Purrysburg, the place of the trial, to Coosawhatchie," the old Beaufort judicial seat. In 1805 news of a conspiracy in the up-country created panic and led to the death of at least one slave.[22]

Unrest in the Lowcountry continued, and was evident during the War 175 of 1812 as well as afterwards. In this war between Britain and the fledgling nation, another overture to desert was made to the slaves of the southeast coast. Many responded and left with the British, 3,000 going to Nova Scotia. On one of the islands near Charleston, slaves in 1813 readied themselves for an anticipated British attack which would ignite a black insurrection. The gathering, in anticipation of the British and (533) prospects of freedom, gave rise to a "freedom hymn." According to an informant, the hymn and account of its creation was given to him in (539) 1835 by an English abolitionist-missionary, and was compiled by one of

175 spiritual state. While slave labor produced "the clothes we wear, the food we eat, and all the superfluities we possess," they received "nothing equivalent." On the contrary, wrote Bryan, "we keep from them the key of knowledge, so that their bodies and souls perish together in our service."[37]

If Christian instruction among slaves languished in supposedly liberal coastal Georgia, in coastal South Carolina it was deplorable among many Baptists whose attachment to the former preachings of George Whitefield stopped short of missionary work among the slave masses. Baptists were interested in extending the faith, as evidenced by how quickly they spread to the coastal and upcountry frontier. But this evangelical zeal did not extend to the general slave population. Early Sea Island Baptists were involved in protecting slavery, consolidating property, and maintaining a money crop. Like Episcopalians, they viewed efforts of spiritual uplift among masses of slaves as dangerous and antagonistic to economic interests. [567]

175 797 The War for Independence did much to unsettle growth in the Sea Island region. Once the war ended the people engaged in reconstructing their society and reconstituting their economic priorities. Little time was spent on contemplation of their souls. In 1792, Matthew Tate, a friend of Benjamin Rush and an Episcopalian minister, became rector at St. Helena Church in Beaufort. The spiritual life was low according to Tate, who was himself primarily interested in economic advantage. Since there was no other Episcopal clergyman for 40 miles, Tate boasted of the money to be made from conducting marriages and funerals. Also the availability of single, preferably wealthy widows was a notable concern of the rector's.[38] Given such pecuniary preoccupations on the part of ministers it is understandable that the state of Christianity suffered.

175 567 Religion did not assume a prominent role in the lives of either Baptists or Episcopalians in the coastal and Sea Islands region. Indigo, cotton, rice, slaves, and a well-planned social calendar received highest consideration. In 1766 a Philadelphian, John Bartram, visited the coastal and Sea Island regions of South Carolina and Georgia. Even at this early stage of development a certain affluence was observed. Bartram wrote in his diary that the "best inhabitants" had great farms distanced from the seacoast towns. On the farms "they keep numerous Negro slaves, who are closely employed in cultivating the ground, or sowing plank, or looking after their stock for maintenance of their masters." The farms were

maintained by slaves' industry while the masters "live in the towns in opulency and ease" riding out to the "farms" once in a fortnight "as any urgent occasion requires, sometimes taking their ladies with them and children in chairs so that there is not the appearance of . . . business."[39] 175 567

The first census return for the new nation reported a population of 18,753 in Beaufort District (St. Helena, St. Luke, and Prince William Parishes). Of this number, 14,236 were slaves and 153 were free blacks. The resort town of Beaufort contained about thirty houses, and the majority of the population was scattered over the islands and on remote mainland plantations. Timothy Ford, a Northerner whose sister married into the DeSaussure family of South Carolina visited the region during that time. He commented on the absenteeism, the superfluity of servants, and the idleness of Southerners who called themselves planters, "yet know little about the process and art of planting . . . all is committed to overseers and drivers." Of religious life, Ford noted that the Episcopalian Church was the "preeminent and fashionable mode of worship," but also observed that: [162]

> . . . the spirit had not lately visited this parish; the shattered and forlorn condition of this church gave but too much room to question their zeal; and the few that attended it (about fifty whites) to doubt the ardor of their devotion.[40]

A St. Helena planter's wife, Abigail Capers, wrote a friend in 1791 that there were about seventy families on the Island, forty of whom were eminent planters "with strong attachments to each other." The only church, she wrote, was a tiny Episcopal chapel of ease. Sundays were for the most part not spent in church but among "genteel company" on various plantations and engaged in a variety of "amusements." It was a simple but elegant life where "nothing is so much coveted as the pleasure of possessing many slaves . . . happiness is confined within the narrow limits of a plantation with a great many slaves."[41] 175 (567)

In the early nineteenth century Baptist churches were still tiny unpretentious houses of worship with no slave galleries, although personal servants did attend services. White memberships were so small that no specific seating arrangements were needed—blacks occupied the back of the churches and whites sat in the front. Furthermore, even though revivals were conducted in the Beaufort area in the early 1800s, church rolls indicate no significant gain in black membership. Not until 1817 did the Beaufort Baptist Church have its first extension to admit galleries 175 567 294 (177)

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175 and a tower, a first indication of a notable black membership at this
567 Island church. In 1819, the Euhaw Church reported a membership of
794 "18 Whites and 4 Colored," and the church at Black Swamp had thirty
white and one hundred black members.[42]

Some slaves, during the "Second Great Awakening," beginning around
175 1800, were exposed to Christianity in Baptist churches. Often blacks
567 were "converted" when no whites came forth. In 1800, Richard Furman
797 of Charleston wrote to a Philadelphia Baptist minister of the success the
new minister at Euhaw Church was experiencing. In nine months, "Mr Cook" had "baptized about twenty persons." Most of them "are Negroes."[43] This is a very small number, but nonetheless demonstrates that actual black membership does not tell the whole story. Obviously blacks were baptized in many instances without being given church membership. While this demonstrates black exposure to Christianity, it also illustrates the paucity of "Christian" instruction.

Even the religious revitalization that began in the North after the War
175 of 1812 and spread to some parts of the South, was not greatly effective
in the Carolina Lowcountry. In 1821, a long-term visitor from Connecticut living in Robertville wrote:

> The Religious state of things here it is hoped is improving. A few are enquiring "What they Shall do to be saved" . . . we who have been accustomed to having ministers settled in every village must feel the dearth of ministers in this part of our country where the toilers are ripe for the harvest and seem only to want Faithful Laborers in the vineyard. . . . The inhabitants of this place are all connected by inter-marriages, and I am afraid are very wordly minded and even the Professors appear to think more of the rise and fall of cotton than the rise and progress of religion.[44]

Although Baptists had no national association, local organizations exemplify how negligible black membership was in white churches. By 1806 there were 130 Baptist churches in South Carolina, most of which were in the upcountry. Communicants totaled 10,560, 3,500 of whom were reportedly black. Sixteen years later, according to the 1822 South Carolina Baptist Convention, the number of black Baptists had not greatly increased. The Baptist Church at Charleston had a black membership large enough to allow for separate meetings with "proper" regulations by 1819. It is questionable how many of the total black church membership was made up of slaves. In the case of the Charleston Baptist Church's black membership, the majority of the congregations were free. Yet an

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eyes may be opened." Nevertheless, missionaries increased their efforts 175
yearly and other denominations applauded the undertaking. In 1838 an
interdenominational group of influential clergymen met under the auspices
of the Methodist Missionary Society and asserted their growing
concern and commitment to slave conversion. They agreed that areas of
the large cotton and rice plantations along the sea coast from the Savannah
to the Pee Dee rivers in Georgia and South Carolina would receive
the bulk of attention. In most of the state, churches existed in nearly
every area, but the group admitted that even there, accommodations for
blacks were insufficient. However, at least no one could say, "Negroes 175
of the neighborhood are without the gospel." Such was not the case "on 797
the Sea Islands, and in the delta of the rivers, where the Negroes are
most numerous." These thousands had no churches accessible to them,
and the interdenominational group confessed, "they are as destitute as if
they were not inhabitants of a Christian land." The plantation missions
were undertaken for the benefit of these slaves.[20]

Southern churches and seminaries were not long in taking note of the 175
movement. Episcopalians and Presbyterians, as well as Methodists
preached sermons on the benefits of the enterprise. Gradually, some
planters, convinced of the desirability of Christian instruction, publicly
declared their approval at agricultural meetings and in agricultural journals.
Denominational newspapers also kept up arguments in favor of religious
instruction. William Capers prepared a short catechism for the
missionaries' use in instructing slaves. Arguments of appeal rarely varied.
Although the interest of the plantation was preemptory, the security
of the country and saving of black souls were also loudly proclaimed.
The 1830s was a period of persuasion and promotion of Christian proselytizing,
with the Methodist church directing the campaign and receiving
widespread if not unified support from a number of quarters. In the
words of one church association spokesman, discussing conditions in South
Carolina and Georgia during this period, "The religious instruction of
our slave population, entirely suspended in some parts of the country,
through the lamentable interference of abolition fanatics, has proceeded
with almost unabated diligence and steadiness of purpose."[21]

In the Sea Island region south of Charleston, Methodist missionaries 175
acquired early access to some plantations. Two missionaries, George W. 797
Moore and Thomas D. Turpin, arrived in 1833. Moore's appointment 567
included Beaufort and the surrounding islands. His first charge consisted

175 of two plantations and two preaching appointments in Beaufort (attended
797 by slaves from several plantations), six plantations on Paris Island, and one plantation on each of the five remaining islands around Beaufort.
567 Turpin's appointment in the Beaufort District, called the May and New River Mission, included Hilton Head, Bull's and Dawfuskie Islands, and the mainland between the May and New Rivers.[22]

The most successful method of gaining permission to evangelize slaves involved having a sympathetic local planter approach fellow slaveholders on behalf of the missionaries. In the Sea Islands Methodists were actively supported by William E. Baynard. The Baynard family were large slaveholders with plantation interests on Hilton Head and Edisto Islands as well as on the mainland. Baynard was a frequent intermediary between planters and missionaries. Writing to him in 1833, one Hilton Head planter expressed his confidence in the cause:

> I am anxious that the mission to the colored people in this community be continued . . . that the gospel should be preached to them in their cabins and the Scriptures explained in such a plain and simple manner that they may fully understand what true religion is.[23]

Baynard was not always so successful. While some slaveholders simply refused to allow missionaries on their plantations, others gave the experiment a try but found "results" discouraging. For example, William Pope, Sr., Baptist patriarch of a Sea Island family who owned the largest amount of aggregate acreage on St. Helena, Dawfuskie, and Hilton Head, answered Baynard's inquiry of 1834 in the negative. Pope felt that Thomas Turpin, sent the previous year, had gained few converts. He wrote:

> If I am not deceived one or two of them [the slaves] will long remember him with gratitude . . . but am inclined to think he has not met with decided success . . . he has had to encounter some difficulty, discouragements and prejudices which he has not been able to fully overcome—tho' he has certainly laboured faithfully, and been zealous and diligent in the discharge of his duty.

Pope concluded his letter by stating that the missionary's services would be discontinued since the "means and opportunities" of religious instruction had improved; there were "now two churches on this Island [Hilton Head] in which there is service at least twice a month."[24]

There appeared to be a consensus among certain planters in the May and New River Mission to withhold cooperation from Turpin and the Methodists. James Sealy, ~~also a planter~~ on Hilton Head Island, wrote to

Baynard in a letter dated the same day as Pope's. Sealy expressed hope 175
that "the people" had profited from the missionary's presence, but he 797
"could see nothing of it." Sealy, like Pope, withheld consent for the 567
missionary's coming within the confines of his plantation.[25] Denominational rivalry may have been a factor in decisions to deny Methodists access to the slaves, and Baptists expressed the most skepticism toward missionaries. But more significantly, the Methodist-Baptist controversy provides insight into religious activity among the slaves prior to the missionaries' coming.

Thomas Turpin, assigned to the May and New River Mission in 1833, had his own opinions about the state of religion in the Sea Islands, and defended himself regarding his unsuccessful efforts among the bondspeople. Turpin had access to about 1,000 adult slaves, one third of whom were in the Baptist church and in the "Negro societies, and all of them under Baptist influence." Yet these slaves rarely saw the pastor of the church or attended its services. Instead, Turpin related, the slaves had "societies organized among themselves." According to the missionary,
"these societies were very corrupt." Turpin described a scene at one black [681]
society gathering on Bull's Island in which a particular type of penance,
drawn from African traditions, was engaged in as punishment for sin: [673

> They had three degrees of punishment, and . . . the punishment was inflicted agreeably to the magnitude of the crime, according to their view of the crime. If the crime was of the first magnitude, the perpetrator had to pick up a quart of benne seed . . . poured on the ground by the priest; and if of the second, a quart of rice; and if of the third a quart of corn; . . . they also had high seats and low seats, but incorrect views relative to those who ought to be punished; . . . it was also a rule among them never to divulge the secret of stealing: and if it should be divulged . . . that one had to go on the low seat or pick up the benne seed.[26]

The rite the slaves engaged in is remiscent of high-low seats and a 17
pyramid of degrees in the Poro and Sande in Upper Guinea, and some 681
secret societies in Angola. The Poro inner circle was a social regulating
as well as religious body. It stopped quarrels, caught, tried, condemned, 567
and punished social criminals. In Poro-Sande culture, high seats be- 797
longed to a few old religious leaders of high degree.[27] But the way Gul-
lahs employed the use of high-low degrees was unique and reflected their 673
ability to adapt a past tradition to the organization of their slave community. The association of the communal and the spiritual is evident,

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since this regulation took place within a religious context, ostensibly under the rubric of Christianity. High and low seats in Gullah society assumed a meaning different from African Poro-Sande society. But the function of regulation and community control was still present. The Gullahs reserved the "low seat" for those who betrayed community interests by divulging "the secret of stealing," undoubtedly from the master. This demonstrates the seriousness of solidarity among the people. Thus picking up the benne seed was reserved for the worst of crimes "according to their view of the crime." While the Methodist missionary believed the slaves had incorrect ideas about who should be punished, slaves themselves were using an internal logic with little reference to Protestant conceptions of sin. This Gullah interpretation of sin was at variance with their Christian instruction. A sense of contrition for the safety and peace of the plantation or out of fear of the Christian God was not a motivating issue. For the Gullahs, moral guilt fell on those who forsook socioreligious authority and loyalty in the slave quarters. The presence and influence of black leadership was also revealed as the "punishments" were administered by a "priest." This implies no relationship to the Christian church to which some of the slaves belonged. Missionary Turpin believed the rites strangely akin to Catholicism. Obviously they were not. But in West Africa Poro-Sande priests and priestesses were responsible for administering justice and punishment. Thus this role had some cultural-historical continuity. Slaves saw nothing incongruous about adopting elements of Christian religion and adapting those to aspects of their traditional spiritual heritage still serviceable in the New World setting.

The penance for the "sin" of divulging the secret of stealing was no brief activity, but a rather trying feat. A "gentleman" residing on Bull's Island informed Turpin that an individual usually could not pick up all the scattered benne seeds in one night. And "if it was not done in one night they had to continue until they did it." Thus while the benne seed ritual was not comparable in degree to African punishments instituted by the Poro Council for community crimes, there is a symbolic reference. While representing a form of censure for erring members, it was not the way "Christianized" slaves were expected to interpret the concept of "sin." Turpin stated in his report that having to contend with "all this superstition and ignorance, together with their prejudices against Methodism," he had added few church members. Nor, reported Turpin,

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did he strive to do so, "but rather . . . to beat down their prejudices 681
and to establish a better principle of religion among them, all of which I 567
should not presume any person in this low country would attempt to 797
contradict."[28] 613

Planters in the May and New River Mission region were offended by
statements implying that they tolerated practices such as the one Turpin 175
discussed. Sea Island Baptists felt under attack for not instructing black 797
converts in "true" principles of Christianity and for baptizing slaves without 567
scrutinizing their religious life. Turpin was smarting from the cold reception he received from planters. Turpin did in fact infer that some planters were aware of and permitted un-Christian practices among slaves baptized as Baptists. It was after all a "gentleman" of the Island who had explained to Turpin the workings of the benne seed penance he had observed. Methodist unpopularity among Sea Island planters was recognized at the Missionary Society Headquarters. Soon after the report was circulated, Turpin was removed from the May and New River Mission, and assigned to the John and Wadmalaw Islands Mission in the Charleston District. Turpin insisted, however, that he did not intend to discredit the planters. Nor, he said, did he mean that planters knowingly sanctioned "corrupt" practices among the slaves. Turpin merely wished to point out how irreligious so-called converted slaves were. Through the pages of the *Southern Christian Advocate*, he made a somewhat cynical apology, which undoubtedly did little to assuage the ire of Sea Island planters:

> But it [the report] appears to have injured the feelings of many of the Baptist friends. I did not intend to injure their feelings, nor any other persons, notwithstanding though, it has been said that I have "shot a ball particularly at the Baptists, and in its glance it was hit the Episcopalians." If it has made any mortal wound by its being received in a light different from what I intended, I feel it my duty to heal the wound.[29]

Turpin had indeed offended the planters, especially his comments on 175
the slaves' lack of "truly religious" training, despite Baptist church membership. He believed that the "converted" slaves made a mockery of Christianity. These slaves who "scarcely ever saw the pastor" of their church were members of the First African Church in Savannah. Andrew Bryan's nephew, Andrew Marshall, was the pastor. In 1830, church membership was 2,417. Although a black church, whites were responsible for control and for the conduct of its members. Whites came to the

175 797 The "interference" and "foreign intermeddling" discussed by Coburn came from two sources. First, Gullah leaders continued to exert influence and they resented as well as resisted supersedence of their authority. Secondly, a growing number of slaves professed affiliation with Baptists of the region. Many missionaries complained that these alleged black Baptists were unfamiliar with Christian doctrines. Thus from the missionaries' point of view, the complexity was actually three-tiered: a powerful black leadership holding sway through beliefs and practices apart from Protestantism, a conflict with black "professors of the faith" whom missionaries considered mere "pretenders," and both problems compounded by the skepticism of Baptist and Episcopalian slaveholders. The missionaries admitted that religious instruction under such circumstances was a formidable task.[34]

Methodist Sea Island missionary activity experienced various periods of growth and decline. Methodism was persistent, but there was never a massive moment into the church on the part of the Gullahs. By 1839, the May and New River Mission had been discontinued and the limited number of converts absorbed by the Beaufort and Savannah River organizaiton. Also by 1839 Methodists created a new mission in the Beaufort district, called Pocotaligo, and another in the Charleston district called Edisto Island Mission, including Jehossee and Fenwick Islands. Edisto was by far the most prosperous of the Sea Island missions. By 1842 Beaufort Mission embraced thirty plantations but contained only 310 members, with 370 children under instruction. The Pocotaligo missionary ministered at nine plantations, had 295 church members, and 156 children under catechetical instruction. Progress was slow in these areas compared to other missions north of Charleston and in the upcountry. For example, the North Santee Mission embraced only fifteen plantations but had 528 church members and the Black and Pee Dee Rivers Mission covered twenty-five plantations with 1,180 church members. By the time of national division within the Methodist church in 1844, the Beaufort Mission had dropped to twenty plantation appointments, and Pocotaligo still served only nine. The Edisto Mission however, maintained steady progress.[35]

175 567 797 Figures relating to church membership are not impressive considering the thousands of slaves in the coastal and Sea Island region. Still, Methodist missionaries remained active there until 1861, even after it became apparent that Baptist influence would predominate. Not only were white

175 Baptists already in the area, but many were large slaveholders. Hence
567 Baptists had the power to control the type of contact, religious or other-
797 wise, to which slaves were exposed. Organization of the Methodist Epis-
copal Church South and the Southern Baptist Convention in 1844–45
gave a new impetus to the movement of slave conversion. But by then
Methodist missionaries were employed mainly by Episcopalian Sea Is-
175 land planters. In 1844, island appointments south of Charleston included
Port Royal, Paris, Dawtaw, Coosa, Ladies, and Beaufort. However, even
797 during these years, missionaries indicated that the "spiritual state was not encouraging." By 1855, Sea Island appointments had dwindled to preaching places only on Ladies and Paris Islands, and a tiny Methodist chapel erected in Beaufort. On the mainland around the Sea islands, Beaufort Mission continued to increase in terms of plantations served and preaching appointments. Yet even here it was clear that while Methodists seemingly provided Gullahs with their first organized exposure to the doctrines of Christianity, they rarely gained a large number of new or lasting converts for their own denomination as occurred in other regions of the state.[36] Nevertheless, despite the distrust manifested by a number of Lowcountry and Sea Island planters, and the problems with black leadership, Methodism left its impact on these slaves who ultimately adopted the Baptist faith.

The Response

175 567 (797 Gullah response to Methodism is partly related to the nature of slavery in the Lowcountry. Plantation bondage in the Sea Islands and coastal regions of South Carolina and Georgia was a complex phenomenon. Similar to the West Indies, it contributed to growth and development of cultural autonomy among the slaves because visible aspects of Africanity could remain. At the same time, however, the region proved ultimately to be fruitful ground to plant seeds of Christianity among the slaves. One finds little of the paternalism which some historians claim was the determining ideology in the relationship between master and slave. Sea Island slavery was generally absentee. Planters might have several tracts of land on one island, as did the large Fripp family, or have holdings in several regions of the coast, as did the Popes, Fullers, Jenkinses, and Butlers. The real family home was usually in Beaufort, Charleston, or Savannah, in some cases as far away as Philadelphia, Newport, or En-

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gland. Industrious masters might remain near their plantations during the "sickly season" by building homes on a high bluff. From these retreats, such as St. Helenaville, they directed plantation affairs through their drivers and overseers. The enormous black population working in the fields rarely saw a white except for overseers and their families, or through brief sometimes seasonal contact with slave masters.[37]

Bondspeople were under the direct supervision of black drivers who might report to a head driver, also a black man. Slaves recognized these supervisors' powerful position as coming from an outside oppressive force. The Gullahs had little affection or even genuine respect for black drivers. Although exceptions existed, the interests of slave drivers and those of the slave community were inimical. Francis Kemble, an English resident on the Georgia Sea Island plantations of her husband Pierce Butler, described drivers in their role:

> At the upper end of the row of houses, and nearest to the overseer's residence, is the hut of the head driver . . . The negroes, . . . are divided into troops or gangs, . . . at the head of each gang is a driver, who stands over them, whip in hand, while they perform their daily task, who renders an account of each individual slave and his work every evening to the overseer, and receives from him directions for their next day's task. Each driver is allowed to inflict a dozen lashes upon any refractory slave in the field, and at the time of the offense.[38]

Laura M. Towne, a Philadelphia osteopath who went to the Sea Islands as part of the Port Royal experiment, observed the Gullahs' attitude toward slave drivers. Towne noted that the people complained of one driver in particular named Gabriel. " 'How, boys,' " he answered, " 'You know I cut and slash you for ole Massa. Ain't you know I no do dat Massa do worse.' " The men smirked at him scornfully. Certainly the black drivers' position was unenviable. They did not usually seek the role, yet were bound to do the master's bidding or face punishment themselves. Nevertheless, antipathy toward black drivers was observed on many occasions. Yankee cotton agent, Edward Philbrick, stated that their position over the masses of slaves did not seem to derive from intelligence or respect. As soon as the artificial element of force was removed by masters and overseers fleeing, "these black foremen generally dropped back to the level from which they had been temporarily raised." They had no useful authority over the slaves and attempts to reinstate them in the management of crops "generally met with singular failure." Antebellum Methodist missionaries stated the slaves believed drivers would

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175 •567 [533] (539) never get to heaven. Gullah soldiers sang a song about the black driver during the Civil War. White witnesses thought the song appeared "quite secular in its character, yet its author called it a 'spiritual' ":

> Fust ting my mammy tell me,
> O' gwine away!
> Tell me bout de nigger-driver,
> O' gwine away!
> Nigger-driver second debil. . . .

The relationship between the missionary's observation and the "spiritual" further illustrates how Gullahs viewed slave drivers. One driver, "noted as a good Negro, and a Methodist," had heard since his childhood that no driver could ever get to heaven, "and they need not try, for none . . . could see God's face in peace." The distraught man told a Methodist missionary, " 'to that tree every night I want to pray; at last God, for Christ sake, pardoned my sins.' " The black driver became fully convinced that " 'Christ is able to save a driver as well as anybody else.' " And he hoped, said the missionary, to hold out faithfully so that " 'people will see at least one driver in heaven.' "[39]

175 The type of bondage experienced by the Gullahs was related to the Lowcountry's settlement as well as the staple crops produced. The colony of Carolina was settled by West Indian planters who created a system of slavery notorious for maltreatment of black laborers. One individual, a German, traveling through the Carolina Lowcountry after the American Revolution, observed that:

> The condition of the Carolina negro slaves is in general harder and more troubulous . . . wretched food, more work, tedious work, harsh and cynical treatment at the hands of owners and overseers. There is less concern here as to their moral betterment . . . proof is in the fact that they do not multiply . . . numbers are refreshed thru importations.[40]

175 567 248 461 The continued harshness of the system was maintained. After indigo cultivation, both South Carolina and Georgia became absorbed in cotton culture. Although not as backbreaking as indigo, Sea Island cotton extracted a heavy toll from black workers in many ways. The staple needed a tremendous amount of labor and laborers, especially after 1820 when the international market value of fine cotton soared. On an average plantation, fifty to sixty days of labor per slave were required to produce one bale of fine Sea Island cotton. The crop required more hoeing than short-

staple cotton, a different type of picking, which had to be done from 175
only slightly opened bolls, and a painstaking preparation for the staple 567
market in the ginning process. Men were usually responsible for seed 248
extraction of Sea Island cotton. Jenkins Mikell of the Peters Point Plan- 461
tation, Edisto Island, gave an account of this activity on his father's estate:

> The operation was long, tedious and fatiguing. It was done on gins operated by foot, a crude plantation, or domestic device for getting out the seed from the lint—one man to a gin. He would stand on his left leg and work a crank-like arrangement, somewhat like a crank that drives a sewing machine, first with his right foot, then when he got tired . . . he would hop on his right foot and work his gin with his left foot—never stopping his gin as he changed. . . . As each man has thirty pounds of lint cotton to gin out for his day's work, he has no time to loaf.[41]

Sea Island slave women also performed arduous, monotonous, and fa- 175
tiguing work on the plantations. The crop was harvested from late Sep- 567
tember through December, a cold, damp part of the year on the coast. 248
Women and boys were considered the best pickers, though all field hands 461
would be ordered out at first harvest. As soon as enough cotton was 462
gathered, ginning began which took many men away from the fields. Women pickers worked rapidly yet carefully, so not to bruise the delicate fibers for this would affect the grade. Sea Island planter William Elliott maintained that "the greatest care is used by them to separate from the cotton, all dried leaves or other substances that may impair or discolour." While "prime, young and strong" women engaged in this activity, the elderly, "less sturdy" women and those near their time of childbirth worked in the gin house. They thrashed or "whipped" seed cotton to further remove loose sand or dirt then passed it on to "assorters." This group of women stood before long tables and divided the lint according to color and fineness. From there men received the "assorted" seed cotton for seed extraction. Once this was accomplished, women "moters" inspected and divided the cotton once again, removing fibers stained by the black cotton seed crushed by the gin. Finally, before packing, the cotton was subjected to one final inspection at the "mote table."[42]

The whole process created a tenseness which everyone experienced. A 17
driving momentum was kept up, but quality work was insisted upon 567
since that was the key to the lint's value. Activities were coordinated so 248
461

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that cotton did not lie around or be stored after picking since too much exposure injured the product. Some overseers worked the slaves at night and on Sundays. The rawness and wetness of the weather did not deter managers and planters from ordering all "available" hands out to the fields. Though work in the gin house was considered "light" work, this "cotton barn" offered little relief from cold and dampness. The air inside was so unhealthy that slaves preferred the openness of the fields. Workers breathed flying lint and dust during the long hours as they labored in standing positions.[43]

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The labor had a telling effect on the slave women's physical health. A callous attitude developed toward needs of pregnant women, postpartum illnesses, infant care, exhaustion and exposure to inclement weather. Bondswoman Susannah, in relating to Laura Towne, the tragedy of having all three of her living sons sold away, mentioned that she had actually had twenty-two pregnancies. Another defiant Gullah woman who worked in the house was beaten frequently by order of the mistress and retaliated by bringing "not one nigger" to Maussa. Another woman was buried up to her neck in earth as punishment, a few days after she had given birth to a stillborn child. Laura Towne, who saw signs of illtreatment, recorded various accounts:

> On this place, the Oaks, Loretta showed me her back, arms and breasts today. In many places there were ridges as high and long as my little finger and everywhere marks of the whip. She said that her children had been killed in her by whipping. She says it was because when "heavy with child," she could not do the full task of a field hand. I suspect also being rather apt to resist and rather smart in speaking her mind, poor thing. She has suffered terribly and it is no wonder that she is more indifferent about her clothes and house. . . . She says this was "de cruelest place."

Loretta lived on the plantation of Daniel Pope, a member of the Sea Island Baptist "aristocracy" who "gave no shoes, salt, molasses, nor Sunday clothes . . . neither would he allow the field hands any meat, nor permit them to raise pigs." In the year before the Civil War Pope determined to make the people work as much as possible, "so he kept them in the field from morning till night and lashed them every day."[44]

Francis Kemble noted on her visit to the Georgia Sea Islands that the principal hardships fell to the lot of the women. She wrote of her first visit to the "Infirmary":

> Women lay prostrate on the floor, without bed, mattress or pillow, buried in tattered and filthy blankets. . . . I stood in the midst of them, perfectly unable

> 17 567 to speak. . . . Here lay women expecting every hour the terrors and agony of childbirth, others who were groaning over the anguish . . . of miscarriages—here lay some burning with fever, others chilled with cold and aching rheumatism on the hard cold ground, the draughts and dampness of the atmosphere increasing their sufferings, and dirt, noise, and stench, and every aggravation of which sickness is capable, combined in their condition.[45]

175 567 Conditions among the female population affected Kemble deeply. She spent much time trying to alleviate deprivation and discomfort. For her concern she faced the resentment of Pierce Butler, who considered her interfering with plantation "discipline." An antislavery Englishwoman, Kemble claimed she married Butler without knowledge of his human property. Their divergent views caused dissension between them. On one occasion, Kemble wrote of Butler's reaction to the petition of a group of slave women:

> Mr. ———— was called out this evening to listen to a complaint of overwork from a gang of pregnant women. I did not stay to listen to the details of their petition, for I am unable to command myself on such occasions and Mr. ———— seemed positively degraded in my eyes as he stood enforcing upon these women the necessity of their fulfilling their appointed tasks . . . as a *duty*.[46]

The conditions of labor under the "peculiar institution" hindered longevity and a natural increase in birth rate survival among the slaves. Both races paid in different ways because cotton planters did not usually attend to their estates personally, and because they too often judged managerial quality by the magnitude of cotton profits. But illegal imports still contributed to the increase in slaves. The last slave vessel to arrive in the Sea Islands, the ship *Wanderer*, was in 1858. Sea Island planters had opposed reopening the slave trade in South Carolina in 1803, apparently because it might have decreased market value of their own slaves at a time when these planters were economically vulnerable. However, after the close of the African trade to North America in 1807, and the rise of Sea Island cotton, planters engaged in smuggling. Illegal importations continued to contribute to the native African population.[47] Even more significantly, many American-born slaves were only one or two generations from African ethnicity, because many were imported into the Sea Islands during the last two decades before the War of Independence.

Thus Methodist missionaries found very oppressed but tightly knit communities of African-Americans still clinging to patterns of social behavior and modes of worship, largely a mystery to whites, having devel-

175 oped through African cultural convergence. Their pattern of speech was
567 one example of this. "Their language," wrote one missionary in 1840,
"though . . . understood by themselves, cannot be by one unaccus-
175 tomed to them, without great study and application." It was a peculiar
567 creation—an English patois. As previously discussed, Lorenzo Dow
197 Turner's linguistic study of Gullah, conducted over a fifteen-year period, involved many former slave informants. He views Gullah as a creolized form of English with elements of survivals from African languages spoken by ethnic groups brought to South Carolina and Georgia. Turner found most retentions present in vocabulary but also in elements of sound, syntax, morphology, intonation, and word formation. Yet as previously mentioned, Gullah was even more than a distinct pidgin English or dialect, but a means of expressing oneself in the most graphic and sometimes literal sense. Arthur Sumner, a Northern teacher on the Sea Islands during the Civil War, found it "easier to understand a foreign language":

> 'Talk we get dinner,' means 'do you mean that I shall get dinner?'
>
> Byron came to me this morning with a message from his mother.—'Ma says, if you give her some trade. . . .' Can you make it out? Oh, dull girl! The meaning is clear. Ma wants to know if you will give her some thread.[48]

William F. Allen, another Northern teacher, also wrote about the Gullah's peculiar interpretations and usage of English. For instance, "stand," referred to the state or condition of a person, place or thing. On one occasion, Allen, teaching sentence structure to a class of children, had them go over to the window and then asked them the color of the sky. "Nobody could tell," and most of them "stared straight ahead at Jimmy, who was in the yard, and I half expected them to say 'black.' " Finally "Abraham" ventured "white," then "red." Dick, a former house man, passed by the window and Allen expressed his frustration, to which Dick replied promply, " 'lick'em":

> "Well Dick," said I, here's a chance for you to lick Tom, who was appearing around a corner of the barn. "Tom, what's the color of the sky?" Tom stared at the sky, but said nothing. Dick grinned. "Tom, how sky *stan*'?" "Blue" shouted Tom.[49]

175 Missionaries categorized black spirituality as "curious superstitions" or
793 as types of worship reminiscent of Catholicism. Gullahs had their own
797 religious leaders who sometimes professed Christianity and solicited

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> Dis berry same Jesus, dis berry same Jesus,
> We heares dese people de talk about;
> Dis berry same Jesus . . .

(539) Chreitzberg finished his labors and headed back to Beaufort by boat. Undoubtedly the black boatmen had heard his sermon. It was a dark night and the effect of the scene was heightened by "one of those thundergusts, so frequent in our latitudes." Chreitzberg and his associate sat at the stern of the boat, comfortably "gazing at the clouds." The lightening gleamed in the distance, "with the sullen roll of the distant thunder":

> We were sitting at ease in the stern of the boat, suddenly a sound struck upon our ear, that we can liken to nothing save the shriek of a lost spirit. This we found to be the chorus of a song the boat hands were preparing to sing, the chorus we cannot write; it was something between a groan and the cry,—"have mercy"; and was sung at the end of every line.

(539)

> O Lord, O Lord! what shall we do?
> What shall we do, what shall we do?
> What shall we do for a hiding place;
> No hiding place for sinner here.
> We run to de sea—de sea run dry;
> We run to de rock—de rock da sink;
> We run to de tree—de tree ketch fire;
> We run to de grave—de grave bus open;
> We run to de door—de door shut close;
> We wring we hands, we grine we feet,
> We cry O Lord, O Lord, O Lord,
> No hidin' place for sinner here!

> The words written, may only serve to excite a smile, but when sung, the effect is directly the reverse; as in the intensity of excitement, one holds his breath to catch every intonation of the voice; he will, in spite of himself, be affected to tears.[65]

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The Gullahs sense of their own human frailty was expressed in their spirituals. Illness, floggings, fatigue from overwork, and the ubiquity of death were features of daily existence. The harsh Sea Island bondage must have contributed to a longing for a better world at best or for another one at the very least. For some slaves an eternal reward would justify a life that was often painful and joyless yet not without hope. Some conscious rationale regarding a future being might ease a portion of the strong sense of injustice felt toward the present, and fill gaps left by features of traditional African religion and philosophy not transferable or appliable to the New World situation. In this way the Gullahs gradually developed a holistic religion with components of both experiences. The helplessnss implicit in the Christian motif was a central ingredient of Methodist teaching. But one need not seek an explanation for identification with Christianity in Methodism alone, with its prostrating sense of fatalism. Aside from biblical example, and need for a complete world view, the Gullahs' own ill-fated lives and the frequent occurrence of untimely deaths were often sufficient to bring forth the poetry from within. The following Sea Island torchlight burial is an example of the kind of tragic scene that might well motivate the creation of a spiritual: 175 567 771 175 764

> On one occasion of burial, I have reason to believe much good was done. A woman, who was a member of the Church, and who had died in full hope of immortal life, was to be buried at night, it being the most convenient time for the people to be together. Accordingly I met the people at the time appointed. The plantation being large, many were present. The corpse was conveyed about a quarter of a mile to the burial ground, the procession moving slowly and silently along, with lighted torches interspersed through the ranks. This presented a solemn scene; but after we arrived at the burying place it was still more solemn. A grove standing in the midst of a large clearing, which had been sacredly kept for years as belonging to the dead, undisturbed even by the footsteps of man, except when another was to be laid in the earth, and under the shade of the cedars. Here we all met in the midst of the grove, around the grave. It was a dark night, but in the midst of the grove it was still more dark. All was silent, except the thrilling note of the whippoorwill, who had made this lonely retreat its home; all around us lay the graves of the dead of all sizes. The reflection from many torches presented them full in view in every direction, as though they had but just been closed; so thick was the shade above that no grass grew on that spot. I have attended many of my fellow beings to the grave; but never did I witness a more solemn time, and yet I felt it a blessed time. I felt it a duty to try and improve the occasion of our being together; and indeed it was a time of weeping—some of the most stubborn were melted into tears. The husband of the deceased and her infant child were near the grave; he, before a careless man, now wept aloud—and since that period has shown his grief was not of a worldly kind; he has offered himself to the Church, and his child he has had baptized. Many others on the plantation have become serious, and are now on trial.[46]

The spectacle of this young woman's funeral and the presence of the white missionary preaching the prospect of life after death aroused thoughts of the finality of human life and generated desires to transcend reality and be projected into a peaceful future existence. More than likely a (771) (533)

175 burial scene such as the one above prompted the creation of a most poi-
764 gnant Gullah spiritual. It was recorded during the Civil War by Thomas
533 Wentworth Higginson, Commander of the First South Carolina Volunteers. He considered it "the most poetic of all their songs."

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> I know moon-rise, I know star-rise;
> Lay dis body down.
> I walk in de moonlight, I walk in de starlight
> To lay dis body down.
> I'll walk in de graveyard, I'll walk through de graveyard,
> To lay dis body down.
> I'll lie in de grave and stretch out my arms;
> Lay dis body down.
> I go to de Judgment in de evinin' ob de day
> When I lay dis body down.
> And my soul and your soul will meet in de day
> When I lay dis body down.[67]

175 Certainly Gullahs wanted to believe in a bondless futurity, and many
771 accepted assurances of the missionaries, if not their discipline. Undoubtedly, a number of Gullahs felt that their existence on earth offered so
797 little and mortal doom was so certain that nothing was gambled by adopting Christianity. Their imaginations and aspirations were quick-
•567 ened by inspiring parables, stimulating renditions of undeserved agonies of the long-suffering man-god, his earthly demise, and ultimate triumphant rebirth. The parallels were clearly hard to resist.

Thus it might appear that the hopes and expectations of planters such as C. C. Pinckney were realized—that as professors of Christianity, slaves resigned themselves to their circumstances in return for the hope of a heavenly future. Yet it is a mistake to interpret the Gullahs' acceptance of some Christian teachings as a reflection of negative attitudes toward earthly life. Nor did such teachings instill a sense of futility and resignation. Christianity as interpreted by the slaves did not induce them to disavow the present as much as it served to mitigate the inhumane features of their existence as slaves. For the Gullahs, Christianity was a spiritual release from anxieties, frustrations, and animosities, providing a frame of reference to understand their position as bondspeople. In this sense the religion of the slaveholders was diluted, becoming for the slaves a source of strength embodied in their use of Christian ideology as a personification of their will to freedom. Major emphasis of slave religion was not "otherworldly." What Gullahs accepted in Christianity did not

prevent the kind of defensive acts which the planters anticipated would 175
cease. Flight, theft, and reluctance to labor were means of undermining 771
plantation order and were acts of resistance that continued to plague 797
planters although more and more blacks became "converted."[68] True,
they did not rise in revolt. Memories of the consequences of failed rebellion 567•
attempts and strong kinship ties encouraged another type of resistance involving less individual risk while creating more collective energy. The goal after all was freedom. Doctrines of the New Testament exposed the Gullahs to a kind of freedom in a spiritual sense but also upheld their right to physical liberty and equality.

Gullah reaction to Christianity under Methodist tutelage was complex. 175
On the one hand, the slaves responded to the warmth and tolerance 797
demonstrated by missionaries. Acts of sincerity and kindness induced
the slaves to take an interest in Methodist teachings. Once Gullahs applied 567
Christianity to their own daily lives, they grasped how its tenets could, in some ways, reflect the nature of their experiences as a people. On the other hand, the paradox inherent in Christian teaching as presented by the Methodists did not escape them. Gullahs rejected doctrines instructing them to be dutiful and obedient to slave masters, but embraced the teachings about the suffering of Christ, the resurrection, and the impartiality of a future judge who would right past wrongs. One finds no evidence of spirituals applauding an obedient slave, admonishing a disobedient one, or warning a slave against the retribution extracted by God for "crimes" against a slave master. The benne seed ritual evinced just the opposite implication. Contrary to the planter's desire, slaves did not fear "another tribunal," and as "Christians," continued stealing corn and rice, burning cotton, and fleeing to the swamps and marshes. If anything, the introduction of Christianity among the Gullahs enhanced their justification for deploring the system of bondage, and provided sound arguments for what was sensed all along—the equality of humankind.

The strongest reaction against Methodism existed because of the cultural 175
barrier between missionaries and Gullahs. Although early white 797
Methodism accepted emotional expressions as signs of godliness, missionaries
among the Gullahs emphasized a primarily stodgy instructional 152
approach to Christianity. Methodists permitted and applauded the emotional 786
outpourings characterizing Gullah spirituals. But other physical manifestations were often viewed as "ungodly." Missionaries noted that

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17 been preached for many years to our Negroes." The boast needs qualification and amplification. Certainly as far back as Whitefield and the Bryans periodic spurts of whites *preaching* to blacks occurred. Also the more recent and protracted Methodist presence in the Lowcountry is another illustration. Moreover, some slaves could occasionally take advantage of the few existing white-controlled black churches in the Savannah and Augusta, Georgia area. Most Baptist churches in the region were members of the Savannah River Baptist Association organized in 1803 by Georgia and South Carolina. In 1818 the Association divided, including only churches north of the Savannah River and within South Carolina. Jurisdiction was in the districts of Beaufort, Barnwell, and Colleton, but most member churches were concentrated in Beaufort District. By 1830 the Savannah River Association consisted of thirty-two churches. Back rows and galleries seated free blacks, as well as domestic and artisan slaves. Thus despite assurances of William Fripp, prior to 1830 the masses of slaves were not included in Baptist apostolic activity and only nominally represented in a few white congregations.[1]

175 In 1831 and 1832, a short-lived but prolific Lowcountry revival oc-
curred and reportedly stirred a number of planters in the Sea Island
797 region to accept a religious affiliation. The effects of this "remarkable"
religious awakening were most visible in Baptist congregations, and rec-
ords of the Savannah River Baptist Association indicate a comparatively
large membership increase in these churches. By 1831 the largest Beau-
fort District churches were Euhaw, Pipe Creek, Black Swamp, Beaufort,
St. Helena, and May River. In 1830, just prior to the revival, the com-
bined number of baptismal candidates for these churches was 164. To-
ward the end of 1831, a total of 228 baptisms were reported. In 1832
[795] Black Swamp and Pipe Creek made no reports, but the other four larger
churches reported a total of 619 baptisms.[2] Considering the paucity of
whites in these areas the numbers represent significant increases. Early
records had no racial breakdown, but evidence indicates that some of the
converts before 1831 were black.

175 Both Episcopalian and Baptist planters "smitten" during the famous
1831 revival reportedly took new interest in Christianizing their slaves.
● 567 The former denomination allowed Methodist missionaries to preach and
797 teach among bondspeople. No missionary movement for slaves was or-
ganized by the Baptists, however. And rather than allow Methodists on
their plantations, most Baptist planters who favored the enterprise pre-
ferred to accept "converted" slaves into their own churches.[3]

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Even some time after 1831, general Baptist concern for the spiritual well-being of their slaves was limited. Only a small number of churches showed significant increases in church membership in about a ten-year period following the revival. This gradual progression itself was unique to older Sea Island churches. Leading Baptists stimulated to “duty” by the “revival spirit,” and mindful of the currents affecting church and state nationally, attempted to generate more Christianizing activity through their influence in the Savannah River Baptist Association. In 1832 the Association formed a committee to seek funds from member churches to hire Baptist missionaries for the slaves. Since this effort was a slow process, the Association further recommended that ministers devote a certain part of their time exclusively to the slaves. The organization went on record as “feeling a deep interest for the spiritual improvement of our colored population, who have hitherto been neglected.”[4]

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The committee was composed of large slaveholders, many of whom were also deacons or pastors of the more prosperous churches at Beaufort, St. Helena, Black Swamp, Hilton Head, and Euhaw. These congregations had comparatively large black memberships, and the committee members were known for their “good works” in general and for the interest they took in converting their own slaves. But the resolutions expressed more of the committee's own sentiments and personal concern than a real plan of action. Baptist congregations were autonomous, and slaveholders in the Sea Island region resisted efforts of individuals in the denomination to create a Christian instruction movement. For a variety of reasons, Baptist efforts at slave conversion met with some success where it existed. But if measured in terms of church membership and frequency of exposure, such endeavors, were not extensive.[5]

About a third of South Carolina's Baptist laymen and two-fifths of the ministers were slaveholders. Baptists in the Sea Island region, the most numerous sect since 1820, counted the wealthiest and largest slaveholders among its numbers. Consequently, antislavery sentiments were never expressed there despite early debates elsewhere in the South. On the contrary, the official opinion of South Carolina Baptists was expressed in 1822 following the Vesey Conspiracy, by Richard Furman of Charleston. “Slavery,” wrote Furman, “was clearly established in the Holy Scriptures by both precept and example.”[6]

Nevertheless, South Carolina Baptists confronted strong abolitionist sentiment from church members in other regions. As with Methodists, the controversy dominated national meetings in the 1830s. Abolitionists'

175 797 567 primary target was Baptist home and foreign missions. There antislavery elements labored to obtain official condemnation of their Southern brethren not only for slaveholding but for hypocrisy in attempting to spread Christianity domestically and abroad while ignoring their own bondspeople. Accusations prompted some prestigious Baptists to encourage more attentiveness to slave conversion. However, abolitionist recriminations also infuriated Southern congregations. Sea Island Baptists raged over the presence of abolitionist-oriented home and foreign mission "agents." They also denounced abolitionist dissemination of religious newspapers. One such newspaper, *The Christian Reflector*, which argued against a scriptural interpretation of slavery, was sent to Sea Island churches. Not all Northern Baptists were antislavery. Even some of those who were did not advocate abolition, nor propose interference with slavery. Yet the situation was perceived as threatening in the Lowcountry, and it was impossible to procure a consensus on instruction from congregations whose only tie with the regional association was voluntary. Yet, larger churches continued to scrutinize and contemplate the situation. In 1837 further proclamations were used to stir congregations into activity. The Euhaw Church representatives spoke out on the "spiritual destitution of our colored population," and urged the Association to act. The committee previously formed in 1832 had apparently met with little success, and offered three resolutions on the issue. First, emphasizing the duty of ministers to pay "especial attention" to the slaves' spiritual condition. Second, that the "Domestic Missionary" preach to slaves whenever an "opportunity may be offered him." Third, that the General Committee consider the subject and adopt measures to "best secure to our colored population spiritual instruction."[7]

175 Clearly no real commitment was as yet outlined. A few individual churches were already engaging in evangelism among the slaves and attempting to persuade others. The message was one of urging a sense of responsibility, since the Savannah River Baptist Association lacked power to bind churches to a strong general policy. the Association's resources allowed them to employ one missionary, but mainly to serve whites. He ordained officers, preached at the various established churches with no regular ministers, generally superintended the constitution of new churches, and preached to "destitute" whites. Although not specifically precluded from preaching to slaves, the missionary's other extensive obligations prevented his going to plantations where he was needed or ac-

17 in the Sea Island District inspired more attention toward the spiritual welfare of the Gullahs.

175 797 Daniel Baker's conversion of Richard Fuller in 1831 had significant implications for Christianizing efforts in the Sea Islands. Under Fuller's ministration the Beaufort Church became the largest, most influential congregation in the Sea Island region. Fuller was greatly moved by the reformer's cry to instruct the slaves and was largely responsible for the comparatively phenomenal growth of the Beaufort Baptist Church.[23]

Richard Fuller was a member of the Fuller-Middleton family, long-time residents of Beaufort District. Fuller's personal holdings consisted of plantations on St. Helena and Cat Islands as well as the mainland. At the time of Baker's appearance in Beaufort, Fuller was a wealthy, well-established, Harvard-educated attorney not yet thirty years old. His parents were Baptists, but at birth Fuller was baptized an Episcopalian. Following his "moving" conversion in 1831, Fuller was rebaptized and he united with the local Episcopal church. But, not finding the "peace of mind" nor the "inspiration" he sought, Fuller was baptized again, this time in the Beaufort River, and as a Baptist. As further evidence of his reformation, Fuller immediately relinquished his lucrative law practice and declared himself called to the gospel ministry. In 1832 he was ordained a Baptist minister and accepted pastorship of Beaufort Church, where he remained until 1847. He then accepted a call to the Seventh Street Baptist Church in Baltimore where he was pastor until 1871.[24]

175 • 567 797 Late in his career, Fuller confided to a friend that when he was initially "called" to the ministry he resolved to confine his labors wholly to the slave population. But, Fuller claimed, he "was prevented by the hand of God." Although he did not devote his entire career to religious instruction of bondspeople, as a minister in Beaufort Fuller spent much of his time to preaching among the Gullahs. The attention and interest he gave represented a turning point in the religious history of Sea Island blacks. The immense African-American population, previously ignored by Baptist planters and churches, gradually, under the administration of Fuller, became objects of concern from a spiritual standpoint. As white [995] membership increased, slaves of these new members were baptized and the Beaufort Church became a training ground for black Baptist converts at liberty to attend services. Fuller insisted that galleries be given over to the bulging black membership. A special lecture room was also added where black church members could be instructed before and after Sun-

day worship as well as during the week. Slaves attending Beaufort Church were sometimes instructed by their own masters who were also prominent church elders. Aside from scripture, church discipline and rules of conduct were emphasized.[25] 175 797 567

As a Sea Island planter and a favorite son of the community, Fuller could combat some resistance to religious instruction of the slaves. By 1840 he had organized a system of preaching places on the Islands where he or a member of his staff made periodic appearances. Establishment of these preaching stations furthered the Baptist cause, leading to "conversion" of many plantation slaves. While pastor of Beaufort Church, Fuller was respected among the whites as a sincere, inspiring, and effective minister. He was also popular with the Gullahs. Fuller was one of the very few planters who openly denounced the separation of families. He considered this morally wrong and against biblical law. He refused to sell or divide his bondspeople, an important consideration to black people accustomed to seeing "pious" planters disregard slaves' familial ties at a moment's notice. In addition to observing (like a true patriarch) this fundamental principle of humanity, Fuller adopted an evangelical style of preaching said to be filled with "earnestness, fire and melting pathos." An associate who often heard Fuller preach wrote: 175 797

> His whole mien was imposing. When he rose to address a congregation, his very attitude was that of a man conscious at once that he had a most important message to deliver, and that he had the capacity to deliver it worthily. . . . His voice was singularly sweet and of great compassion and managed with such exquisite skill, that his softest whispers were distinctly heard in the remotest parts of a crowded congregation; while his loudest tones did not jar upon the ears of those nearest the speaker. His gestures were always graceful. . . . He subdued others, because, in the loftiest flights of his imagination and the deepest feelings of his heart, he was master of himself.[26]

Apparently a skillful and arousing speaker, Fuller captured the imagination of the bondspeople, something few white preachers could do. The Gullahs also viewed him as a kind and sensitive man whose "good works" were equal to his "faith." No doubt these considerations explain the eagerness with which he was received and accepted by the Gullahs as a preacher and for the warmth with which they remembered him to the Northern missionaries during the course of the Civil War. The Gullahs even created a stanza for Fuller in one of their most revered spirituals: "Massa Fuller on de Tree ob Life, Roll, Jordan, Roll."

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175 •567 797 [795] After Fuller left for Baltimore in 1847, attempts to bring slaves into Sea Island churches were not persued with the same enthusiasm. But in 1853, through efforts of the Savannah River Baptist Association missionary and an energetic new pastor at Beaufort Church named I.M.C. Beaker, Gullahs again became a focal point of concern. During the last seven antebellum years, slave baptisms in the Beaufort River again became frequent. A record was set in 1857 when 220 slaves received into the Church "were all on Sunday morning . . . Baptized by our Pastor . . . in 1 hour and 45 minutes and in the presence of a very large number of spectators." The total number of slaves baptized for that year was also a record—556.[27]

The first phase of Baptist efforts to Christianize slaves, from 1830 to 1845, roughly corresponds to a period of growth in Sea Island churches and, most spectacularly, the Beaufort Church. In 1833, Beaufort District had a slave population of around 30,861. For that year the nine largest Beaufort District Baptist congregations reported a total membership of around 4,419. That was over two and one-half times the total membership of the remaining twenty-eight Baptist churches in the Savannah River Association (whose combined memberships was only 1,666). We cannot be certain about the number of slaves these figures represent, since racial designations were not yet in use. But the majority of these church members were slaves, a hypothesis supported by membership returns of later years for which there are racial designations.[28]

175 795 794 By 1845, when the Southern Baptist Convention was organized, the largest Beaufort District Baptist churches at Beaufort, St. Helena, May River and Hilton Head for instance, reported a total membership of around 5,914. Most of this increase is attributable to slave baptisms and over half of those to Beaufort Church. Total membership for all forty-three churches within the Association was about 8,529. This trend indicates that the most active area of religious instruction was in the Sea Islands. St. Helena Parish, with a slave population of 6,740 in 1845, had two Baptist churches. While St. Helena's Brick Baptist Church was accessible to the several thousand slaves living there, Beaufort Church drew its membership for a forty-mile radius that included six Sea Islands and parts of the mainland. The adult slave population in Beaufort District was around 22,000 in 1840, out of a total slave population of 29,682.[29] Thus approximately one in every five slaves in Beaufort District was a Baptist church member. [162] [567]

In the latter and generally most vigorous period of the movement for 175
Christian instruction from 1845 to 1861, Baptist involvement continued 797
to center in areas where evangelizing efforts were already in progress, 794
such as the Sea Islands. Although several Lowcountry churches did in-
crease their black membership during the period, such augmentation was
numerically insignificant. Most membership returns submitted to the Sa-
vannah River Baptist Association had racial designations by 1848. These
reports indicate that a few individual Sea Island churches maintained
fairly large memberships and Beaufort Church had unusual increases.
But the majority of Baptist churches in the Lowcountry south of
Charleston seemed to fall short of the goal of religious conversion of
bondspeople. Actually neither Sea Island Baptists, Baptist missionaries,
nor lukewarm Baptist churches adequately "served the spiritual needs"
of so large a black population. In 1859, as civil conflict approached, the
total black membership of the Baptist churches within the jurisdiction of
the Savannah River Baptist Association was not yet 7,000.[30] In some
ways these figures are unimpressive, but they nevertheless demonstrate
black exposure to Christianity through Baptist efforts. We can also sur-
mise that black church members were the best conduits of the faith in
the slave quarters. When this is considered, Baptist influence is even
more manifest, for few Gullahs actually joined the Methodist church.
Most Gullahs "converted to Christianity" or even adherents of it ac- 175
cepted the denomination of their masters, a preference that continued 797
even after bondage. This raises questions about the nature of Baptist 567
activity among the Gullahs, and why the denomination of slaveholders
so strongly appealed to slaves.

Superficially, Lowcountry planters appear to represent "paternalism" 175
par excellence. Those "young and refined" citizens of the Sea Island 567
communities who claimed Daniel Baker for their spiritual patron in-
cluded such men as C. C. Pinckney, William H. Barnwell, Robert Barn-
well Rhett, Stephen Elliott, and Richard Fuller. These men represented
the quintessence of South Carolina Lowcountry aristocracy, dominating
landholdings and counting their slaves by the hundreds. Beaufort was 175
the chief place of residence for most Baptist planters. But some of the
stauncher Baptists such as the Lawtons, Robertses, Bosticks, and Nor-
tons shunned "iniquitous" recreations offered by the Sea Island resort
town and created their own manorial splendor at Robertville, Lawton-
ville, and Gillisonville. These planters reportedly excelled in erudition

cern for religious instruction was mainly superficial. Possibly some wished 175
to ease a sense of conscience aroused by the 1831 revival and to neutral- 797
ize criticism from Northern quarters. But more significantly, Baptist interest in Christianizing the Gullahs was prominent where doctrine might be a means of exerting influence over personal behavior and social relationships to further the existing status quo.

"*Christian*" *Slaves*

Mostly town slaves and house servants were first accepted into Baptist 17
churches. Certainly, in the early phase of the movement, these African- 567
Americans had access to the "privilege" of becoming church members. 794
Since Beaufort was the chief place of residence for Sea Island planters, 797
their retinue of house servants had the opportunity, and sometimes were forced to attend Baptist worship. As church membership increased, the next group of slaves in plantation hierarchy, the artisans, were also represented. Field workers were not completely excluded from the churches, especially Beaufort Church. When a slaveholder and his family joined a church, his slaves might be required to join as well. Richard Fuller, for instance, was diligent about accepting his slaves into Beaufort Church and encouraged this among his slaveholding neighbors. Yet few Sea Island Baptists allowed their field slaves the mobility needed to attend preaching places. This rule must have applied particularly to slaves wishing to attend church service in places like Beaufort or Bluffton that necessitated leaving the Islands or vicinity of the plantations for long periods of time and usually required some means of water transportation provided by the planter. Furthermore, these country churches were modest-sized structures, built mainly with the small white population in mind. Not all churches even had galleries. Among those that did, once the more "privileged" slaves and house servants were seated, there was obviously no room for the field hands. According to one former Beaufort slave:

> Didn't have no colored churches. De drivers and de overseers, de house-servants, de bricklayers and folks like dat'd go to de white folk's church. But not de field hands. Why dey couldn't have all got in de church. My marsa had three or four hundred slaves, himself. And most of the other white folks had just as many and more.

Even with favored slaves, concepts of white spiritual egalitarianism did 17
not go far. Beaufort whites insisted in 1841 that the inside stairs leading 567
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17 567 794 to the slave galleries be moved to the outside so that the two races would not have to pass each other, or use the same entrance when they met to worship God in common.[17] One can thus imagine the disdain that "gentle" white folk felt at being in close quarters with field slaves.

17 567 794 799 Some whites considered it a dangerous practice to allow slaves to leave plantations to attend church no matter what their status. Thomas Fuller, Episcopalian brother of the venerable Richard, reported on the state of religious instruction at the Charleston Meeting. Fuller complained that the habit of black church members descending upon the town of Beaufort was deplorable:

> Removed as so large a number are, every Sunday from the control and discipline of the plantation, and impossible as it is for the Church to know and control their conduct, they use their liberty in ways and for purposes adverse to their morals. Nothing seems to me more essential in order to their becoming a religious people, than that they be subjected to the supervision of the plantation, of the minister of a Church, that will investigate and correct their wrong views and bad habits. . . . It is owing, I think, to the want of religious instruction and discipline on the plantations, that the influence of religious instruction and the spirit of subordination among the negroes is so little seen and felt.[18]

17 567 794 Baptist planters themselves recognized and attempted to confront these problems. As church memberships increased, a means of superintending the widespread congregation and keeping slaves on the plantations was needed. Black church members were organized into plantation associations under the jurisdiction of the church.

These "black societies" were the nucleus of the Gullah socioreligious community. They existed even before preaching stations were established and were reportedly religious bodies which slaves entered into voluntarily, although the nature and origin of these societies was unknown. Methodist missionaries found them already organized and a hindrance to Methodist authority among the slaves, especially when their practices were under the rubric of Christianity. In 1833, John Field, a St. Helena planter, wrote to the Methodist missionary assigned to the island. Speaking for himself and "others," Field expressed his disapproval of the societies, and of the slaves' association with the Baptist Church on St. Helena. According to Field, the slaves who joined the church were "almost entirely under the control of Negro leaders." The Methodist missionary's preaching on the island prompted "constant ap-

plication" of slaves for "tickets to get baptized," and join the Baptist 17
Church. The slaves derived no Christian benefit from their association 567
with the church, said Field, but used it as "a place of resort." Field 794
"suspected an influence decidedly contrary to vital godliness," but added
that it could not be prevented "unless I resided on the place myself."[39]

If the benne seed ritual is an example,[40] these societies had some characteristics 175
similar to African associations. It is later argued that the black 567
societies were, like the African societies, units of organization that regulated 794
conduct and served to integrate individuals into the plantation community.
Within these societies Gullahs practiced their own version of
Christianity, and created their religious folk-culture. Baptist planters apparently
intended to alter the "corrupt" elements within these slave associations
and use them to promote a Christianity, suitable to their own
ends. Slaves' familiarity with concepts of secret society, membership, 175
and social regulations suggest a relationship to African institutions that 178
Christian ideas of a community of believers reinforced. Like the formation 567
of Gullah language, the syncretic evolution of African Christianity 794
was a gradual process. It began when diverse African groups framed a
spiritual commonality and belief system into which Christianity, at various
times and with varied intensity, was incorporated, reformulated and
appropriated. For many years, Gullahs heard of "Christianity" mainly
from black rather than white teachers, and this contributed to the persistence
of African norms, thought, and ceremony. But, as the benne seed
ritual suggests, the presence of black "Christians" in the slave quarters
undoubtedly produced debates, challenges, acknowledgments and selective
adaptation even before 1830.

While Methodist missionaries were "suspicious" of the black societies, 175
for Baptists they were a medium for religious service and discipline among 567
the slaves. Thus the black societies served one function for slaves and 794
embodied another for slave owners. At Beaufort and other churches,
slaves professing conversion as Baptists had to unite with a society. 797
Beaufort Church, with its large black membership and extensive records,
illustrates how whites expected these societies to function. At first black
leaders had charge of the societies, but subject to the superintendence of
a resident planter. The black leaders reported at the monthly church
meeting. According to the Minutes of Beaufort Church for November
11, 1840:

> 175 The Committee on discipline are requested to obtain if possible the presence
> 567 of all the colored elders, at their meetings; as from them and them alone [the
> 794 elders] must they expect to receive legitimate reports, of Deaths, the prosperity
> 797 of their societies or backsliding members.[41]

When societies first came under jurisdiction of the Church each one bore the name of their black leader in charge. But by 1850 societies were under governance of a white brother living on the island and the organizations named after their locations. Rather than attend the white church, the black membership was directly affiliated with black societies for purposes of "religious instruction and worship."[42] Thus, black societies were the vehicle through which the Gullahs as Baptists participated in the Christian experience.

175 Although white brethren ultimately were ostensible leaders of black
567 societies, the structure and supervision of the organizations still provided
794 the slaves with some autonomy. Ideally the white brother in charge of a
given society held monthly meetings with society members, scrutinized the slaves' activities, conducted religious exercises, and examined candidates for church membership. Each white brethren was assisted by one or more blacks (depending upon the size of the society) called "watchmen," "elders," or "deacons," appointed by the church at the suggestion of the "brother in charge." In reality, however, the black deacon continued to direct the society. He was responsible for "general watchcare" over the society, and conducted society meetings "to inquire into and report . . . cases for discipline that may come to his attention." He was also at liberty "to hold meetings for worship and exhortation . . . on such plantations as he may have received special permission," and to administer communion. The black elder was in turn aided by "help" on each plantation with a sufficient number of society members. The help supervised members on the plantation, held prayer meetings, and reported weekly to the elder, naming those slaves desiring to join the society. According to a former Sea Island slave, a black exhorter would preach "to de field hands down in de quarters. . . . Meet next day to de Marsa's and turn in de report, how many pray, how many ready for baptism and all like dat."[43]

175 Gullahs had a measure of control in terms of internal structure and
567 worship within black societies. How they transferred that into commu-
(621) nity cohesion is discussed later. Planters primarily wanted plantation discipline preached, breaches of discipline punished, and corrective retri-

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
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bution administered in the name of Christian commandments. Beyond 175
that superintendence, slaveholders spent little energy on Christian doctrine. 567
Planters probably welcomed opportunities to provide slaves with (154)
a "safe" outlet for releasing pent-up hostilities and emotions. After 1845,
many plantations had rude structures where the Gullahs could "hold 175
prays" on weekday evenings as well as Sundays. Northern missionaries 567
were appalled at the condition of the "Prays" or Praise Houses. "The 346
owner furnished a better stable for his horses than a house of worship for these sons and daughters of the King of Kings," wrote Mansfield French from Port Royal.[44] Yet for Gullahs the Praise House was a plantation community hall where they related secular experiences, directed their religious life, openly expressed among each other their innermost frustrations, longings and expectations.

The white brother in charge of a society was generally a large slaveholder 175
sometimes with several plantations on the Island he superintended. 567
In other cases a Baptist overseer, but slaveholder in his own 794
right, was assigned to a society. The names of Fripp, Chaplin, Barnwell, Baynard, and Fuller dominate Beaufort Church Minutes as "brethren in charge" of black societies. Most of these planters rarely spent long periods of time on their island plantations, preferring the comforts of their Beaufort townhouses. Most knew little about their slaves' activities (except house slaves) unless some depredation was committed and reported. In the early period of church superintendence of societies, white brethren were lax about meeting with the organizations, often leaving this responsibility with the black elders. In 1842 the Beaufort Church Business reminded white brethren of their duties:

> Resolved . . . that *Brother Chaplin be requested to attend himself in person as the Church deems it important that the Brethren appointed and responsible be themselves instructors of the societies confided to them.*

The Church had difficulty retaining a white brother in charge and resignations were frequent. Most Baptists apparently did not want the responsibility of overseeing black church members.[45]

Thus, black societies primarily accommodated the slave membership 175
of large Baptist churches with little or no Christian instruction being 567
imparted by white society leaders. The other sources of exposure to white 797
Christian teachings came from Methodist missionaries, from preaching places established by Richard Fuller (though supplied less rigorously after

175 ●567 797 [795] [794] he left), and late-coming Baptist missionaries who brought the last surge of slave baptismal activity in the mid-1850s. Apparently little screening occurred prior to uniting with Baptist churches, except examinations imposed upon the slaves by black leadership. Slaves were accepted into the Church from the societies, and admission was based on a profession of faith, evidence of "good character" from the slavemaster, and recommendation from the white brother in charge, who relied on intelligence received from the black elder.[46]

195 567 795 797 This lack of a meaningful conviction to teach Christianity raises the question of why some slaveholding Baptists accepted such large numbers of slaves into the churches at all. Neither a revival spirit nor Northern agitation fully explain the motivation. But activities of the Church Committee on Discipline perhaps express the manner in which Baptists expected Christianity to best serve them as slaveholders. Their change in attitude reflected the general shift away from paranoia about Christianizing slaves. After 1845 many believed that practical Christianity could work for the slave system. And although the majority of Gullahs had little or no contact with the Baptist church itself, church members felt the restraining arm of the faith through the Committee on Discipline.

175 Church discipline is an old concept, dating as far back as the sixteenth century. Early Baptist discipline was similar to the English Separatists' 1696 "Confessions of Faith," and integral to views of Christian fellowship for believers. This spiritual and communal sense revolved around creating a "true and orderly gospel church," with members conducting personal behavior according to Old Testament biblical tenants. Later, London Baptists' "Confessions of Faith" reflected concern for "order and discipline," and this was emphasized by their American counterpart, the Philadelphia Baptist Association, when in 1742 they composed their confessions and annexed a particular discipline code to it. In 1769 the Charleston Baptist Association adopted the Philadelphia model. Not all, probably not most, American Baptist churches had explicit discipline references in their confessions although discipline was a reality in the churches. But Charleston Baptists and their Lowcountry congregational extensions were products of the Calvinist-Baptist tradition as is reflected in their patent emphasis on discipline, and in other ways previously discussed.[47]

Nineteenth-century Southern and frontier evangelical congregations fostered a sense of community through worship, revivals, camp meetings, prayer meetings, and discipline. Church discipline kept alive the 175 "heavenly pattern" which each church personified. This "city set on a hill" meted out censure and excommunication regularly to offending members who paled its self-image of purity and piety. As the country expanded, church discipline was used to control the raw excesses of new communities struggling against such "immoralities" as "drinking, fornication, gambling, dueling and profanity." Evangelical churches grew increasingly more powerful and espoused an increasingly conservative theology in the South and perhaps elsewhere. This trend toward religious conservatism was tied, though not exclusively, to political and social developments in the South, most notably to slavery. An obvious manifestation of this was the national polarization of church denominations.[48] In the Lowcountry, another significant and more immediate expression of efforts to protect the existing social and political order through religion is found in the function of discipline committees on plantations. Every Lowcountry church examined for this study with a large black membership had such a committee. The nature of this committee's concern with the slaves' activities reveals how Baptists intended to make Gullahs "good Christians" mainly insofar as Christianity made them better slaves. The (795) work of the Committee on Discipline in the largest Sea Island church amplifies this thesis.

Once attention focused on slave conversion, the most pressing church 175 business was discipline of slave members. The Committee existed pre- 795 viously, but was reorganized and restructured in 1840, and its function 294 broadened. According to the Minutes, the disciplinary body governed behavior of all church members, "both bond and free," but was specifi- 567 cally charged with looking into breaches of conduct committed by bondspeople. This committee of eight brethren investigated a few white cases, mostly involving social lapses. But in the "inquiry and investigation" of slaves, the "Committee on Discipline" had "broad" but "conservative powers."[49]

As with white "brethren in charge" of black societies, prominent Sea Island slaveholders, such as Benjamin Chaplin, Saxby Chaplin, William Fuller, James Fripp, and Edward Fripp dominated discipline of the Gullahs. Furthermore, members of the Discipline Committee might also double as superintendents of a black society. Sea Island planter Benjamin Chaplin, for example, was a member of the disciplinary body and also superintendent of the Beaufort Society. Noted for cruelty to his

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slaves and intemperance, even Chaplin's peers admitted that his "violent temper" which was "so entirely ungovernable," disqualified him as a religious teacher.[50]

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Discipline Committees met once a month. Prior to 1845 black elders met at the church with the Committee and reported on the state of religion in their societies. Later, this procedure was discontinued. Instead, white brethern in charge of a given society met with black members one Sunday in the month and subsequently reported to the Discipline Committee, providing a list of recommendations for action. The responsibilities of the brother in charge were elaborated in the Minutes of Beaufort Church. Should any "private or personal offense be reported," he could take such action as "he may think proper." If the offense was of a "more serious character, involving immorality," it was the duty of the brother in charge to carefully investigate "the facts," report these to the church at its regular discipline meeting, and offer his recommendations. The white brother was also "authorized and expected to examine applicants for restoration" of their membership, "and if satisfied," to recommend action to the church.[51]

Thus only the "more serious" offenses got to the church discipline level, and all manner of "lapses in moral conduct" and plantation "crimes" were considered serious enough to warrant censure by the church. Slaves were suspended and excommunicated as often for "crimes" against plantation authority as for "moral" breaches. Frequently mentioned were offences such as "killing beef," "hog stealing," "barn burning" and simply "theft." Additionally, flight appeared consistently as a reason for excommunication. In 1841 for instance, bondswoman Betty was "suspended for running away," and the same action was taken against Tom for "harboring above Betty." Other reasons for excommunication were "impudence," "Sabbath breaking," "fornication" and "adultery." Occasionally slaves requested "permission to marry."[52]

The word of plantation authority subjected a slave to church discipline. As in a white court of law, a bondsperson's word was worth nothing in a white church. Monthly society discipline meetings were public. They were meant to dishonor and humiliate the slaves before each other, to admonish others against "wrong doing," and to prostrate the "guilty" before "church" law. The Gullahs were confronted with their "sins" by their earthy masters as they would face a "heavenly father" in the future. Interests of both "masters" were represented as the same so a crime against

a slaveholder was a "sin" in the eyes of God. This outlook was pressed 175
on children who, after 1845, sometimes received instruction on Sunday 795
mornings in the form of oral catechism, recitation of the Ten Command- 794
ments, and prayers. Rebecca Grant recalled that in Beaufort her former
owners "wouldn't miss de catechism," and they [the children], "was taught 688
they must be faithful to the Missus and Marsa's work like you would to 567
your heavenly Father's work." Slaves on St. Helena Island discussed "Good Billy" (William) Fripp, a Baptist master who was referred to as "good," not because of his benevolence toward his slaves, but for his avowed piety and strict sense of biblical discipline. According to the Gullahs this "leading Baptist" carried his Bible out to the fields, showed slaves "Moses' law," and then flogged them "accordin'."[53]

Baptist slaveholders applied selected scriptures to the Gullahs' daily life struggle. Planters hoped a general spirit of contrition, via a "fear of God," would prevail in the slave quarters and subvert independent thought and action. They viewed discipline meetings as having a purgative effect on the Gullahs and defeating their efforts to resist the most degrading aspects of bondage. Double jeopardy existed for these black church members. If discovered committing acts against slaveholding interests, they suffered bodily punishment. But worse perhaps was expulsion from black society, the Gullahs' primary source for freedom of expression. An excommunicated or suspended church member would receive no pass to attend a preaching place or "society" or be allowed to "hold prays." Slaveholders tried using Christianity to exercise psychological dominance over the minds of Gullahs as they employed brute force to maintain physical control. No other spiritual activity detracted from or competed with these religious tribunals. When they occurred, plantation
authority insisted on the slaves' undivided attention. From the Beaufort [797]
Church Minutes we find that even the Methodist missionary's limited
activities had to revolve around these assemblages:

> The Pastor to write to the Rev. Mr. Moore [Methodist Missionary] and request him to appoint any other Sabbath than the first in the month to preach on Ladies Island—as that is the day appointed for the discipline of that Society attached to this Church.[54]

White Baptists' use of church discipline to undermine the Gullahs' 175
active indignation and struggle against bondage is evident when consid- 795
ering the nature of the "sins" of which black church members were found 794
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and though they stand about for hours in the sun, we have never missed 175
the slightest thing."[56] 685

In the benne seed ritual, Gullahs dealt with theft in a spiritual context, 673
under the guise of the Baptist faith. But the moral judgment was the 181
opposite of Christianity. "Sin" was not upon the slave who stole from
the master, but the individual who "divulged" the act. Gullahs possessed
a keen sense of communal morality which, in this regard, was not subverted
by dogmatic features of Christianity. While stealing from "Maussa,"
was a sin, it was wrong—that is, against elements of collective interests
and values—to steal from a fellow slave and hence betray community
confidence. Gullahs extended their moral philosophy further than race
or condition however, by refusing to steal from whites simply because
they were white. But, the Gullahs were not naive. Their shrewd analysis 175
of justice helped them distinguish between friend and oppressor even 685
among white Northern "missionaries." And some white Northern Baptist
ministers sent to the Sea Islands during the Port Royal experiment 673
were more avaricious than cotton agents. One Reverend Phillips, on full 797
salary from a missionary organization, also drew a salary from the government 181
as a superintendant of plantations, and was provided with "house- 794
rent and rations." Still, Phillips "demanded," from St. Helena Island
Gullahs, "half-a-dollar from every church member for the half year ending
January 1." Since some one thousand blacks on St. Helena, claimed
membership in Brick Baptist Church, Phillips expected to collect quite a
sum. But the Gullahs refused to pay. Other ministers "of like kidney"
were dismissed for "lying" and for "stealing" contributions sent to the
Gullahs by Northern congregations. On one occasion, Gullahs discovered 175
that James McCrea, a minister representing the American Missionary 797
Association was cheating them. They refused to attend McCrea's 794
religious meetings and refused to labor in the cotton fields he supervised.
Likewise, when some government cotton agents on St. Helena charged 181
over 100 percent more for store items than was being charged in Beaufort,
these stores were broken into "and robbed of a good deal of clothing."[57]

Flight, another problem continually plaguing Sea Island slaveholders 17
and punished by both church and state, was usually provoked by some 567
extreme act of cruelty, or gross injustice. Sometimes slaves left because 181
of a strong desire to visit a loved one. Gullahs rarely ran away with
intentions of "going North" for instance. Aside from the near impossi-

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17 bility of such an accomplishment, an intense love of family and deep
567 attachments to familiar surroundings kept runaways nearby. Perhaps even
181 more than any other slaves in the United States, Gullahs maintained a clan-type kinship community, and in their isolation clung tenaciously to these relationships. This attitude was also expressed toward their plantations. Those Gullahs able to purchase small twenty-acre plots of land during the Port Royal experiment, resisted buying on any plantation other than their "own." They thought "it was as bad as slavery if they had to leave their old homes." Yet as slaves, Gullahs ran away frequently and bad treatment was the leading cause for absence. Treatment was also
17 a recurring theme in Gullah songs, as indicated by this slave worksong
567 related by Sam Polite:

> 533 I wuk in field on Maussa Johnnie Fripp plantation. Sometime we sing w'en we
> (539) wuk. One song we sing ben go lak dis:
>
> "Go way, Ole Man
> Go way, Ole Man
> W'ere you bin all day
> If you treat me good
> I'll stay 'till de Judgment day,
> But if you treat me bad,
> I'll sho' to run away."[58]

17 Not all masters were cruel. For example, the Gullahs represented "Capt.
567 John" Fripp as a kind man. Still, his "whipping post" was within twenty feet of the "drawing-room." The tree, "a sprawling Asia-berry," covered with grey moss, "looked wiered enough." "Capt. John" reportedly never "licked" hard nor struck "in the same place twice." Fripp's houseman, Dick, only recalled getting one "hard" flogging, when he watered the old man's garden with seawater. However, his wife, the cruel one, liked "to stand at the window to see the floggings," administered by "Driver Moody," when "Capt. John" was away. Thomas Chaplin of Tombee Plantation was tough enough, and threatened his slaves a great deal. He was also an insensitive master in regard to selling slaves, unable to believe blacks had the same familial loyalty as white people. He wrote in his Journal, "cowhide was all talk with me." But one must take such a comment skeptically since he frequently had his drivers do the flogging. Chaplin was not remembered by his slaves for excessive cruelty nor for kindness.[59]

Rarely could a Sea Island slave boast, as one did, that their backs "stan

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lak white man's," that is, with no marks of the whip. "Talk o' lick um sar?" answered one slave when queried about floggings, "yes, sar, nebber did noffin but lick um sar." He insisted that they were whipped when they didn't work and "when we work, hard lick um all same sar." A "devil" for cruelty was Alviro Fripp who "before he got religion use to cuss and cuss and cuss." But when he joined the Baptist church, he could no longer cuss, "so he used to lick 'em instead." The "richest man on St Helena," Edgar Fripp, was reportedly the meanest, and his temper knew no bounds at "full moon." He also worked his slaves all night in full moon at cotton-picking time. The Gullahs went out of their way to avoid him for if a hat was not tipped quick enough or a bow low enough, Fripp would "lay his horsewhip on them well."[60]

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Of the many cases of harsh treatment and sometimes actual barbarity, few compared with the 1849 incident recorded by Thomas Chaplin in his Journal. Chaplin's neighbor, James Sandiford, was brought before an inquest of planters regarding the death of his slave, Roger. In examining the slaves' remains, Chaplin wrote that "such a shocking sight never before met my eyes." The slave, a born cripple who "used his knees more than his feet," had been instructed, on a "cold and bitter day," to paddle a boat downriver for oysters and then to cut a bundle of mud marsh. Roger, instructed to return before "high water," did not show up until "ebb tide." But he brought back seven baskets of oysters and a small bundle of marsh. "That," commented Chaplin, "was more than the primest of my fellows would have done." But Sandiford gave Roger thirty lashes for not returning sooner, for not cutting more marsh, and for hollering loudly while being flogged for the first two offenses. Sandiford later eavesdropped on a conversation Roger had in the kitchen with another man. Two versions of the exchange were reported. According to the planter, Roger stated that if he had "sound limbs" he would shoot down a white man before he took a flogging. The man to whom Roger spoke denied this, informing the jurors that Roger said "he would turn his back on them if they shot him down," which Chaplin believed was the truth. Neither comment, in Chaplin's opinion, warranted the punishment Roger received:

> For these *crimes*, this man, this demon in human shape, this pretended Christian, member of the Baptist Church, had this poor cripple Negro placed in an open outhouse, the wind blowing through a hundred cracks, his clothes wet to the waist, without a single blanket & in freezing weather, with his back against the

175 •567 partition behind him, & fastened on the other side—in this position the poor wretch was left for the night. . . . The wretch [Sandiford] returned to his victim about daylight next morning & found him, as anyone would expect, dead, *choked*, *strangled*, frozen to death, *murdered*.[61]

That same day the jurors reached a verdict—the slave met his death by choking on the chain his master put around his neck, "having slipped from the position in which he was placed." The verdict, Chaplin wrote should have been Roger died from "inhumane treatment," for he not only strangled from trying to disengage himself, hence becoming entangled in the most "shocking position," but was also "stiff dead" from the cold. In Chaplin's "individual" opinion, the act was deliberate, but unpremeditated murder. Whether Chaplin attempted to convince the court of this is unknown. The case, like many such situations was certainly murder, but it behooved slaveholders to protect their position. The "witness" against Sandiford was a slave, the planter was related to at least four of the eight jurors and property rights were supreme in the South. Whatever Chaplin felt in private, his public posture was another matter. Furthermore, five years later, he defended an overseer who killed a runaway slave for stealing watermelons.[62]

175 567 795 Since Sandiford was a Baptist planter, his conduct came before the Beaufort Church where he held membership. The crime apparently occurred on February 18, 1841, and the inquest was held the next day. However, not until March 31 was the incident was brought to the Beaufort Church's attention according to the Minutes. At that time it was discussed at the "Business Meeting," and Sandiford ordered to appear at its next session. On May 5, after receiving "a letter" from Sandiford, his case was "postponed for further consideration." On June 30, "the case of Brother Sandiford was again postponed," and never mentioned after that time. Sandiford's letter was not part of the Minutes and its contents are unknown. Undoubtedly he defended his actions, and though the case probably made him an unpopular communicant, he was never "disciplined." He eventually sold his property and left the region. But more significant, this rawly violent, not to say un-Christian act went uncensored by the Baptist Church.[63] One can imagine what a stir it caused among the slaves, some of whom probably had sanguine expectations that at least ecclesiastical action would be taken. Such occasions reinforced for slaves the fact that even in matters of "Christian" justice, a double standard applied.

Thus during the Civil War, observers commented on a "total absence of any trace of feudal affection among these people." Even on supposedly "model" plantations with well-built, neat-appearing cabins like the Smith Estate on St. Helena, slaves related tales of white cruelty and black defiance. One slave who did not salute his master "respectfully enough," was ridden "down and over and left in the road until night." When brought back to his cabin, the man was "more dead than alive." Another man helped his wife finish her task after doing his own. He was ordered to flog his wife but refused. For his "obstinance," slaveholder Smith, a "kind" master, gave the man "500 lashes with his own hand." The slave, previously one of the strongest workers, was "completely broken down." Susannah, the sickly but high spirited seamstress on the Oaks plantation, told Laura Towne she once raised pigs but her harsh, domineering master, Baptist patriarch Daniel Pope, forbade this and threatened to shoot them. "'I don't mean impudence Massa, but you cawn't shoot my hogs. What can I do for my children's winter shoes and our salt.'" Pope's slaves were some of the worse off, ill-clothed, ill-housed and ill-fed. However, Susannah's mistress, though full of threats and scoldings, never lashed her seamstress. Susannah attributed this good fortune to "my pride and principle." Another bondswoman, Celia, told Towne how "Driver John" abused the people and how she once "clutched him by the throat when he whipped her husband and two children."[64]

Gullahs who took "to de swamps and marshes" usually either returned voluntarily or were caught. Sometimes "patterollers" apprehended Gullahs as they returned from or embarked upon some innocent but unauthorized personal errand. Brutal corporal punishment and church censure were certain, yet no amount of flogging, stays in the stocks, ball and chains, sermons, suspensions, or excommunications could daunt the Gullahs' high spirit or their natural inclinations to independence. Incidents of flight express these slaves' refusal to accept their masters' conceptions of moral behavior. Although no reliable avenues of physical escape from bondage existed, Gullahs resisted servitude instinctively, undermining plantation and church discipline. When Northern forces occupied the Sea Islands and masters fled, chances for freedom did seem imminent. Masters endeavored to take as many slaves as possible with them to the mainland, telling the Gullahs that the Yankees intended to carry them to Cuba, take their children, and "knock out der brainses against de treeses." Few Gullahs went willingly with their masters to the main-

175 •567 land, but many were taken forcibly. Gullahs risked and often lost their lives to flee, telling horror tales of death and suffering inflicted upon anyone suspected of desiring either to remain on the Sea Islands or to escape from the mainland where the planters "refugeed." The fact that they continued to flee under these circumstances is the best testimony to their sense of independence and will to freedom. One such incident was told to Laura M. Towne:

> A woman today just escaped from her owners on the Maipland. She said she had hard work to escape, sleeping in the marsh and hiding all day. She brought away her two little children. Her master had just whipped her oldest son almost to death because he was suspected of trying to join the Yankees.[45]

Although the Battle of Port Royal ended in an easy Northern victory and occupation, the rest of South Carolina remained in Confederate hands. Planters fled the Sea Island region but returned, sometimes under cover of darkness, hoping to force slaves back to the mainland. Blacks and whites picketing the region could not place men at every landing spot and Gullahs lived in apprehension of the slaveholders' return. Susannah's master returned several times, once telling slaves to burn the cotton. "Why for we burn de cotton? Where we get money then for the clo' sho' and salt?" So instead of burning cotton, they guarded it nightly. Women kept watch and men stood ready to defend their interests when the alarm sounded. At the Oaklands plantation of rebel Baptist Dr. Sams, a field hand named Cupid told Charlotte Forten how his master had daringly returned to St. Helena, risking capture by Northern soldiers, solely to retrieve slaves. Sams attempted to cajole Cupid into cooperation:

> He ordered the people to get all the furniture together and take it to a plantation on the opposite side of the creek, and to stay on that side themselves. "So," said Cupid, "dey could jus' sweep us all in a heap, an' put us in de boat. An' he telled me to take Patience—dat's my wife—an' de chil'en down to a certain pint, an' den I could come back, if I choose. Jus' as if I was gwine to be sich a goat!" added he, with a look and gesture of ineffable contempt. He and the rest of the people, instead of obeying their master, left the place and hid themselves in the woods; and when he [Sams] came to look for them, not one of his "faithful servants" was to be found.[46]

[688] [795] To the end Baptists had "faith" in the "faithfulness" of their slaves, apparently believing that the white church had secured fidelity among the Gullahs. Just how far some whites took this assumption is illustrated

by a statement issued by Prince William Baptist Church as late as May 175
20, 1865: 567

> Found the following coloured members have deserted their homes, the homes of 688
> their owners and their church and we fear the Cause of God. They were excommunicated. 795
> Boston, Amy, Sallie, Jane, Hannah, Jerry, Ellen, Ransom, Rina, Abraham, Annie, etc. . . .[67]

In attempting to regiment male-female relations in the slave quarters 175
Baptist slaveholders demonstrated the most hypocrisy and cynicism. 567
Masters separated families by whim and will regardless of religious convictions. Baptist planters sold "Christian" slaves without trying to rationalize such sales in correspondence with the laws of God even when these sales fragmented families. "I give to my son Alec, a son of my wench, boy named Jimmy," wrote Joseph Lawton, the "illustrious" pastor of Black Swamp Church at Robertville where elaborate galleries for slaves and free blacks were constructed in 1824. Slaves lived in constant dread of separation. "Every slave know what, 'I'll put you in my pocket sir,' mean" said former Robertville slave Isaiah Butler. A Northern Baptist published an appeal to slaveholding Baptists which contained an 1835 advertisement taken from a Southern newspaper. It was a notice of an auction telling "its own sad tale," and was a comment on Southern clergymen's rationalization about slavery. The "property" of the estate of "the late Rev. Dr. Furman," prominent Charleston Baptist and supporter of religious instruction for slaves, was for sale. Aside from three lots of land and a library, there were: "27 Negroes, some of them prime, two mules, one horse and an old wagon."[68]

Yet despite frequent forced family breakups, the church was particularly 175
pharisaical in pretending that slaves were free agents. Gullahs considered 567
"guilty" of "adultery," for example, were excommunicated as a 795
general rule, for according to biblical law it was a sin to "put away" one's (688)
wife or husband. This ludicrous issue was debated, however, and the (684)
charge rescinded if an individual went before the church via the black watchman or white brother in charge and asked permission to "remarry."[69] Few Gullahs took this step, seeming to prefer exercising their independence insofar as they could within a forced situation. The folly of this supposed violation of scripture was not lost to their intelligence, and they usually ignored such censures.

Slaves' wishes in choosing a mate were sometimes ignored, and unions 175 567 584

175 567 584 were neither sanctioned in law nor respected by slaveholders. Still Baptist churches "devoutly" passed sentence upon Gullahs for "adultery" and "fornication." Perhaps this gesture aimed at giving Gullahs a false send of equality—the same laws for both races regardless of circumstances, as implied by the Savannah River Baptist Association.[70] Possibly this an attempt to demoralize and humiliate—main ingredients of Christianity as taught to slaves. In the interest of "order" and cupidity, masters sometimes denied legitimacy to slaves' emotional inclinations, forcing couples to live together against their will because of convenience and profitability. According to Sam Mitchell, on the Chaplin plantations a slave had to tell the master as soon as he began to "cote." Mitchell added, "If Maussa say 'no you can't marry dat gal' den dat settle it, you can't marry um. He don't lak his slave to marry on nodder puson plantation." In like manner, Harry McMillan testified before the Freedom Inquiry Commission:

> A man saw a young woman and if he liked her he would get a pass from his Master to go where she was. If his owner did not choose to give him the pass he [the master] would pick out another woman and make him [the slave] live with her whether he loved her or not.[71]

Under these oppressive circumstances, where personal preference was ignored, Gullahs understandably had no respect for the church edict establishing rules of conduct about marital status and decisions.

175 [836] [583] Among Gullahs no stigma was attached to sex without marriage as defined by white society. When asked what proportion of young women had sexual intercourse prior to marriage, Robert Smalls replied the majority did but "it was not considered an evil thing." When individuals settled with mates of their choosing he added, such unions were considered binding. Smalls explained male-female relations among the Gullahs:

> [587] [765] If a woman loses her husband she mourns for him and will not marry again for a year and a half, unless she is driven to it by want and must have somebody to help her. . . .
>
> [586] . . . You hardly ever find a husband will separate from his wife except he finds her going with another man. . . . very few . . . married women are carried away by sexual passion if their husbands can take care of them.[72]

175 567 581 577 Church minutes, then, belie the actual situation by stressing stealth and immorality among the Sea Island region's black population. Gullahs simply operated under a different moral code. Thomas Chaplin, noted

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how strange it was that his first wife's two maids, who married in 1849, 175
were still on "his place," in 1876. But what to Chaplin was even "stranger," 567
was that these "girls" still "have the very same husbands." Undoubtedly 577
many slaves kept the same mates if circumstances permitted. But Chap- (581)
lin was aware of this fidelity only because the slaves were house servants. In a letter to Wendell Phillips Garrison, Laura Towne expressed "indignation" about articles appearing in the *Nation* concerning "immorality among the people of these islands." No one, said Towne, saw more of the islanders than she, "in every relation." Towne gave "an utter denial" of Gullah "immorality." Slavery "did what it could to confuse the minds
of slaves with regard to conjugal relations." But added Towne, "a native (581)
fidelity—instinct perhaps," made the slave marriages "sacred in their own eyes and kept together without legal obligations." On the contrary, Towne stated that in her school of large boys and girls, there was "less impropriety—more purity— I may truly say— than is always met with among whites." When "immorality" occurred, it was "strictly dealt with by the church and by general reprobation in social life.[73]

Northern missionaries reported cases of slaves legalizing their unions 175
out of respect for each other and also probably because of their love of 567
ceremony and "title." Many couples having grown old together, went 581
before "de parson." Elizabeth Botume witnessed the occasion of the civil
ceremony between of Smart and Mary Washington who lived together 585
for forty years. Smart and Mary shared a great deal through the years, and had nineteen children, only one of whom survived the antebellum years. According to Botume, the couple were very happy over the recognition their enduring relationship was given:

> They walked away together side by side, for the first time endowed with the honorable title of husband and wife. Smart chuckled well when we congratulated him, saying—
>
> "Him's my wife for sartin, now. Ef the ole hen run away, I shall cotch him sure."
>
> We thought there was no danger of good Aunt Mary's running away after so many years of faithful service.

During and directly after the Civil War, the situation wrought by slav- 175
ery often led to much unhappiness. Husbands and wives who were sep- 581
arated and forced to take new partners returned to claim their old mates. 585
Baptist discipline did not proscribe slave sales or interfere in any way with the "property" rights of slaveholders. "There was often great dis-

17 793 797 superstitious rites with a purer system of instruction, producing thereby a hybrid, crude, and undefinable medley of truth and falsehood."[78]

Many missionaries saw slave children as the future of the enterprise. 17 567 797 793 Others were even skeptical about that. According to one Methodist, "so far does prejudice extend, even the children on some of these places refuse to be instructed, because of the example of their parents and the older ones." Many Baptist planters left instruction of the young in the hands of plantation "help" who taught the children prayers and whatever else their religious instruction consisted of. Gradually, Methodists were forced to admit that despite their consistent though infrequent preaching and catechizing, they could not successfully compete with black leadership operating clandestinely or with the approval of Baptist churches and slaveholders.[79]

17 567 797 The Episcopalian mission established in 1849 on the Sea Isalands took away the near monopoly that Methodist missionaries previously had among a number of Episcopalian planters. Episcopalian slaveholders observed the same uninterested attitude among the slaves as Methodists witnessed. John Edwin Fripp, a St. Helena Episcopalian, allowed his slaves to attend the preaching of a diocese missionary while Fripp himself was in residence on the plantation. But given a choice, few showed up to hear "Mr. Welch" when the minister was on the plantation. According to Fripp's Journal:

> Sat. Dec. 19th—Rev. Welch is down tonight lecturing to the Negroes. Will go to Seabrooks in the Morning. The Negroes appear very backward in coming to hear him. They are getting tired of religion I expect.

No doubt "religion" was not what tired Fripp's slaves, but the dry "lecturing" which often characterized missionary sermons. Gullahs realized that planters were not truly concerned with their spiritual welfare and the they recognized the one-sidedness of their situation. An old coachman on the same Fripp plantation stated "massa been unjust to we. Take all we labor and get rich, then say we lazy. Can't care for we self, give us two suits a year, dat our wages."[80] No one need wonder about the degree of enthusiasm Gullahs had for the religious emissary of such masters.

Thus, a key to understanding the appeal of the Baptist faith for Gullahs lies in recognizing the slaves' rationale. Methodist emphasis on order and hierarchy left little room for internal flexibility in the denomina-

tional structure. Baptists on the other hand had separate congregations, 17
loosely bound together. Baptists sanctioned black associations that were 567 ●
relatively independent of the church and largely dominated by the slaves 797
themselves. In some cases Baptists even provided Gullahs with a place
to hold society and "prays" meetings among themselves, however humble
such places were. Moreover, Baptist planters authorized religious
leaders from the quarters with whom the Gullahs readily identified. Not
surprisingly then, to the extent that Gullahs adopted Christianity, they [795)
considered themselves Baptists. The Baptist faith became the Gullahs'
own personal religion, one they molded and fashioned away the watchful,
critical eyes of the forces of spiritual "superiority" and physical exploitation.

Why did the Baptist slaveholders permit this flexibility and modicum 175
of freedom to their slaves? The answer probably lies with the slavehold- 567
ers' capacity for self-deception and belief in the power of their ability to 797
dominate (for which as a class they are well known). Thus they were confident that black leaders' presentation of Christianity would not jeopardize plantation interests. In keeping with the merging Southern religious vogue of the time, slaveholders ultimately believed in the soothing effects of Christianity on a slave population's mentality. Furthermore, a limited degree of personal commitment had an effect on some slaveholders' attitude toward Christian instruction. For if "duty" and Christian instruction harmonized in bringing more order and discipline to the plantation, clearly nothing was at risk. The primary reason for Baptist involvement with Christian instruction was its potential for perpetuating power and cultural ascendancy over the slaves, to maintain the "Southern way of life" for the dominant class. The Gullahs, however, perceived the situation differently.

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doctrine. When given the opportunity, they fashioned their own reli- 175
gion. For instance, slaves in the wealthy coastal parish on the Waccamaw 797
peninsula had the atypical experience of receiving, from about 1835 to
1861, very concerted Christian instruction. The rector of All Saints 175
Episcopal Church at Waccamaw was Alexander Glennie of England, who,
with several assistants, spent thirty-three years preaching and teaching 567 •
bondspeople on numerous plantations. Glennie's parish and church were 797
showplaces of the Carolina Coast whenever planters and Southern clergymen wanted to demonstrate how fully they were meeting the spiritual needs of their "people." Glennie himself published a popular book of sermons designed especially for slaves. Hundreds of Gullahs were communicants at All Saints, and "thousands of colored children recited the catechism, intelligently." Observers were impressed with Glennie's effectiveness:

> He has been with them so long and is such an amiable kind man that the negroes love him very much and his example has as much influence over them as his preaching. We all went to the negro church one P.M. . . . the congregation responsed and sang the Te Deum with Mr. G. . . . . When he preached he would go on a while, then stop and ask them questions about what he had gone over and they answered very well.

Yet after the Civil War, returning residents witnessed what they termed [182]
"religious deterioration" among the former slaves: 770

> Chapels were taken over by the negroes and soon resounded with barbaric shout- [178]
> ing, the accompaniment of the debased Christianity of the emancipated slave. . . .
> They have forsaken the way which they had learned, and taken to themselves teachers of their own color. Fanaticism and extravagance rule in their assemblies. . . . There are indications of a return to African barbarism.[2]

During the Yankee occupation, representatives of the American Mis- 175
sionary Association noted that Gullahs were a "religious people," easily 771
inspired to sing and pray profusely. Jesus was "a common theme in their
conversation." But observers also noted that Gullahs knew little of "prac- 797
tical religion." Northern teachers commented on how quickly Gullah children memorized their school lessons. Yet the children's knowledge of religion was strangely confused with the current events in which they were caught up. One teacher, after "plainly" explaining to a Sunday School class of large boys the origin of the Ten Commandments and

175 771 779 against them, as against Christ, and the transgression would ultimately be rectified. Not that they refused to struggle against bondage, but rather the Gullahs actively expressed their resistance and opposition through cultural tenacity, collective strength, a deep identification with Christ, and a conviction that with Him they had a covenant of freedom.

In any case, Christianity largely contributed to helping Gullahs consciously find a reason for being, and much of what they embraced in that religion conformed to this purpose. Thus, while it was difficult for them to grasp the concept behind the Ten Commandments, the story of the Jews being led out of Egypt could be easily internalized. More significantly, although intellectual perceptions of Jesus Christ caused some problems, and Gullahs did not totally comprehended the words of the Sermon on the Mount, nevertheless they saw their wordly existence as closely harmonizing with that of Christ's. They, as a people, were very much within the philosophical drift of the Sermon.

The Gullahs earnestness and simplicity in matters of religion left little room for doctrinal trappings that made Protestantism a religion fashioned to suit the needs of various social groups within Anglo-European society. From the teachings of Methodists and Baptists, Gullahs critically extracted that which gave meaning to their life-struggle, often devising novel interpretations of Christianity. The example of Christ provided uniqueness to their oppression since he too was a great sufferer. The comparison encouraged them to persevere because he was also the embodiment of a life-giving symbol. A ninety-two-year-old former slave 175 771 787 recounted the experience of her mother, who along with her five children was sold away from their plantation. The mother was in a very distraught state when a man, "white and shining" appeared with whom she had the following dialogue:

> 567 "Sarah, Sarah, Sarah!"
> "Yes Sir."
> "What is you fretin' bout so?"
> "Sir, I'm a stranger here, parted from my husband, with five little children and not a morsel of bread."
> "You say you're parted from your husband? You're not parted from your husband. You're jest over a little slash of water. Suppose you had to undergo what I had to. I was nailed to the Cross of Mount Calvary. And I am here today. Who do you put your trust in?"[7]

175 771 779 796 The observations of black Northern teacher Charlotte Forten provide a further example. Forten was a frequent visitor at the Praise House and

World perception. Anthropologist Paul Radin has written that the Christian 771
God provided African-American slaves with a "fixed point," and
that they converted God to themselves.[11] Of the Gullahs at least it might
also be more aptly stated that they converted Christianity to their African
world view. Gullahs used religion as a justification to combat objective
forces, to collectively perpetuate a rich sublimity in cultural form,
and as a spiritually liberating ideology. It was not so much that Christianity
instilled a sense of resignation because of belief in future rewards,
though admittedly for some this was a determining factor, but that an
African philosophical tradition was asserted in the slave quarters.[12]

For slaves, acceptance of Christianity did not imply negation of earthly 567
life. The supreme example of this was their desire for liberty. Freedom 771
was a continuous topic of conversation among them. Robert Smalls, who 175
grew up in antebellum Beaufort, remembered that as a boy he first heard
of Frederick Douglass in the slave quarters of one of his owner's Ladies
Island plantations. Three people in the slave quarters could read and
every scrap of printed matter was given to them to translate. One of the
literates, a recent arrival from Charleston, secured a copy of one of
Douglass's speeches and read it to the slaves. Between the three literate
field hands, the bondspeople of the McKee plantations kept abreast of
the "politicking" over slavery. An old slave woman of Edisto Island told
Northerner Mary Ames, "I heard for a long time of war and the coming
of the Yankees, and I spects my bones be white before I see that time,
but I did live to see them, bress de Lord." On one of the St. Helena [212]
Island plantations, a black carpenter held a secret night school for the
men during bondage.[13] Thus did the Gullahs attempt to apprise themselves
of events affecting their future.

The most obvious testament of the Gullahs' will to freedom is their 175
participation in the Civil War, once it became a liberation struuggle. In 701
May 1862, when General Hunter drafted the men without authorization, 177
there was no desire to fight. The Gullah men, having "smelt a very large
rat," took to the woods to "split rails,"but were soon rounded up. They
were taken to Hilton Head, drilled, kept until after the harvest, placing
an extreme hardship on their families, then discharged without pay or
freedom. Thus, in the fall of 1862, when the authorized draft was called,
with the provision for emancipation, many hesitated. The memories of
the previous impressment were still fresh, and "weakened their confidence"
in "promises for the future." Enlistments were slow at first. But

175 We'll soon be free,
533 We'll soon be free,
539 We'll soon be free,
When de Lord will call us home.

My brudder, how long,
My brudder, how long,
My brudder, how long,
'Fore we done suffrin' here?

It won't be long (thrice)
'Fore de Lord will call us home.[23]

● [567] Slaves in Georgetown were jailed at the outbreak of the war for singing this spiritual. As a little drummer boy explained to Higginson, "Dey tink *de Lord* mean for say de Yankees." Higginson doubted that the slaves made the same association of which their masters thought them capable. Once again he reveals his nineteenth-century "romantic racialism." But no one could mistake the plaintive meaning in the following song, first heard at Hilton Head Island and said to have been a song "to which the Rebellion had actually given rise":

No more peck o' corn for me,
No more, no more,
No more peck o' corn for me,
Many tousand go.

No more driver's lash for me,
No more, etc.

No more pint o' salt for me,
No more, etc.

No more hundred lash for me,
No more, etc.

No more mistress' call for me,
. . . .
Many tousand go.[24]

181 771 567 Thus, while God, personified as Jesus, offered Gullahs an explanation for life and provided a model of virtue, as did their African God, this was not an abjuration of human existence. Their religion contained a

fervent zest for life. As slaves, the cornerstone of their faith rested on confidence that freedom on earth would not be denied them and their progeny. One missionary wrote of how the Gullahs expressed this: 181 771 567

> As they spoke of their trust in the Savior, his assurances, by the application of the promises to their hearts, that "a good time was coming" when their own vines and fig trees would cast their shadows around them in quietness and safety, and no more parting of families be known, our hearts dissolved in sympathy and gratitude in their behalf.[25]

Christianity can be interpreted in fatalistic terms. But to believe Gullahs totally accepted a submissive Christian posture suggests that they did not struggle against the cultural domination that masters attempted to impose through religion. To say, on the other hand, that an element of patience was not present in their form of Christianity would be a denial of historical reality. Resolution of the contradiction may come through understanding the limited role of doctrinal Christianity in Gullah life and thought, and taking a fuller cognizance of the influence of previous traditions. Practically and theologically speaking, Gullahs were not resigned to their condition, and not uncritical of religious teachings. Nor were they beguiled by insipid attempts to "make them better slaves." From their African heritage Gullahs retained optimism—a proclivity to make the best of their near-tragic situation for the sake of communal spirit and future generations. This was more meaningful than blindly striking out and committing racial suicide. The simple issue of the practicality of insurrection must also be considered. They had learned from Vesey and others, perhaps implanting the Charleston insurrection attempt in their memory. They believed armed rebellion was impossible as long as they were enslaved. Higginson stated that he often pondered over why the Gullahs' "daring and endurance" in combat had not manifested itself in armed insurrection against the slavocracy. Predictably, Higginson attributed the lack of large-scale rebellions to "the peculiar temperament of the races, in their religious faith, and in the habit of patience that centuries had fortified." But Higginson added that to have kept "the land in a perpetual flame of insurrection" would have been impossible for a number of reasons: 181 567

> The shrewder men all said substantially the same thing. What was the use of insurrection, where everything was against them? They had no knowledge, no money, no arms, no drill, no organization. . . . They had no mountain passes

> to defend like the Maroons of Jamaica,—no impenetrable swamps, like the Maroons of Suriname. Where they had these, even on a small scale, they had used them,—as in certain swamps round Savannah and in the everglades of Florida, where they united with the Indians, and would stand fire—so I was told by General Saxton, who had fought them there—when the Indians would retreat.[26]

Priceless energy and humanity would have been the fruits of rebellion as far as the slaves were concerned. Such physical confrontations would have left little enthusiasm for cultural creativity. Thus does the quest for examples of physical courage often overshadow a valiant spiritual temper. Gullahs maximized their creative talents, developing a socioreligious collective derived perhaps from the most edifying features of two traditions. In this way they maintained their dignity and provided a legacy of the truest examples of valor and vitality. They maintained a passionate love of humanity so that they could confront their former masters with an absence of revenge. But as Higginson noted, they also possessed a deep sense of progressive rationalism in their calm realization that masters and slaves are natural enemies. In observing the Gullahs' capacity to endure pain and tendency to look beyond their own individiual situation, the surgeon in Higginson's black regiment referred to the men as "natural trasncendentalists."[27] This was true to some extent. Yet a more accurate characterization could be that these African-Americans were natural humanists. For them, integration of the human personality on a collective level was central, so that cultural considerations received primary attention sometimes at the expense of practical ones.

While the African tradition from which Gullahs descended emphasized preservation, protection, and enrichment of life, the phenomenon which unified this anthropocentric philosophy was religion. Hence it is not difficult to understand why Gullah life was expressed from an essentially spiritual perspective. Christianity and traditional African religion combined to provide them with an ideology of freedom, and a noble, mystical explanation for their existence as a people. They internalized the optimism in both religions and both orientations were necessary ingredients in the creation of Gullah culture. Slavery did not erode the African sense of pride, of community, love of home, and of family. Yet who knows how long these attributes could sustain cultural life among slaves, no matter how much their spirits struggled against degradation? Christianity offered the additional cohesion needed to develop a homogeneous people and a society based upon a progressive religious nation-

alism. Consequently, religion cannot be viewed only or primarily as a 181
source of visionary, spiritual fulfillment. Nor can religion be mainly viewed 567
as manipulative. For Gullahs it offered a politic for collective conscious-
ness and group conformity within an African-Christian synthesis. [771]

Freedom was not attained as the 1822 conspirators had invisioned. 175
When freedom came, years later, a New rather than Old Testament 181
ideology partly gave meaning and fruition to that liberty. As Leon Litwack points out, few triumphs in the spirit of freedom could equal the [346]
day in 1865 when in Charleston, a cornerstone was laid for a new African Methodist Church. It was over forty years after the old wooden structure in Hampstead had been destroyed. The new church was to be built by black hands. The architect was Robert Vesey, son of Denmark.[28] In 1822 freedom under the banner of "A Chosen People" eluded black South Carolinians through no fault of those who made the supreme sacrifice. Yet who could fault the Gullahs and perhaps other African-Americans in 1865, as they regarded themselves if not as a chosen people, at least as the "chosen generation" of a "peculiar people?"

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CHAPTER 9

Folk Religion in the Slave Quarters

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> All was silent on the plantation. The sun had gone down and the chill December wind which blew crisply from the tide-river had driven the people into the cabins. Here and there all over the plantation, like the throbbing stars which night had called to light her world, the red glow of the fireplaces flashed out into the darkness through the open doorways, as if to mark the heart of a home. Suddenly a sharp persistent jingle broke the silence. It was the Praise House bell calling the people of the plantation together for their evening "Praise". . . .*

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> The secret societies are an embodiment of . . . supernatural power. Collectively, they provide an institutional structure which bears . . . similarities to the medieval church in Europe. . . . They lay down various rules of conduct, prescribe certain forms of behavior and are the sole agency capable of remitting certain sins.**

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On the Sea Islands, one rarely saw a plantation home that did justice to the name "big house," since most planters maintained their more elegant residences elsewhere. But there was always a large, airy "main house," sometimes inhabited by the planter and his family during the spring and cold season. The main house was situated about half a mile from the overseer's abode. Not too far away from the overseer's residence were [361] the yards and outbuildings, followed by the slave quarters. Gullahs called their quarters "the street," and it was described as "a real street in the

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*"The Long Look," n.d., misc. corr., Penn School Papers, vol. 1, SHC.

**Kenneth Little, "The Role of the Secret Society in Cultural Specialization" American Anthropologist 51 (1949): 199.

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middle of a sandy cotton field, with cabins on each side in a row." The 567
first building on the street was the Praise House, a paintless, cheerless- 368
appearing building of boards that "looked as if a heavy gale might lay it [346]
low." Some antebellum Praise Houses were equipped with a bell (not to
be confused with the driver's horn). Several nights during the week, as [202]
well as on Sundays, its welcoming, soothing sound brought the people
on "the street" together for assembly. The following description, al- 175
though a post-Civil War one, could easily fit the antebellum scene: 794

> . . . soon dark figures moved along those countless little footpaths that intersect the plantation in all directions. 346
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> The Praise House filled slowly. It was a small one-roomed cabin that looked weirdly alive as you approached it through the darkness. The numerous cracks in roof and walls gave the outlines of the building sketched in streaks of light against the background of the night.
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> The room was filled with rough backless benches, and at one end was a little table for the leader. Behind this stood a long bench where several men, officers of the Praise House sat facing the people in motionless silence with half-closed eyes and bowed heads.[1]

Most planters erected these meetinghouses after 1840 to afford the slaves 175
a place for worship and to deprive the inhabitants of various plantations 794
of an opportunity to mingle. Yet the Praise House also offered Gullahs
a means to free expression. It was not only a place for religious gathering 346
and spiritual solace but was essential to their community structure. At 567
the Praise House, among fellow slaves, Gullahs publicly professed what 368
they considered a satisfactory spiritual experience, as it was necessary
to obtain approval from the Praise House congregation before petitioning
the master and the Baptist church for membership. If the religious ex- [795]
perience was not inspiring enough, or if the elders and the membership
doubted the candidate's sincerity, the individual was not recommended
for baptism.[2]

In addition to being a means of bringing conformity and spiritual har- 175
mony to the slave quarters, the Praise House was very much like a town 567
hall where members of the plantation gathered, using prayer, song, and
exhortation to comfort each other. J. Miller McKim, a Northern ob- 368
server very much interested in Gullah music, wrote in 1862: [533]

> I asked one of these blacks . . . (Prince Rivers, Sergeant, 1st Reg. S.C.V.)—where they got these songs. "Dey make 'em, sah." "How do they make them?" After a pause, evidently casting about for an explanation, he said: "I'll tell you,

175 it's dis way. My master call me up, and order me a short peck of corn and a
●567 hundred lash. My friends see it, and is sorry for me. When dey come to de
praise-meeting dat night dey sing about it."[3]

368 The slaves' loyalty was to the Praise House rather than to the Baptist
[533] church few of them ever attended. Even during Northern occupation
[795] and after the Civil War, Gullahs continued to gather at the Praise House
whenever trouble befell their community. Despite the fact that white
Baptist churches were almost completely under black control during the
war (in terms of both structure and organization), the source of power
on the plantations was still the Praise House. And after the war, Gullahs
continued to see it as the center of group life and to conduct themselves
according to Praise House customs and regulations.[4]

Since the Praise House congregation consisted of families who knew,
175 through daily contact, the personal life of a candidate, it was possible to
567 scrutinize behavior and to ostracize an individual, not so much on purely
794 religious grounds as for breaches of trust within the quarters. Elders and
members exerted great disciplinary power over plantation hands, having
the right to "turn dem outen de Pray's House if dey ain't fur walk right."
Hence, while the Gullahs probably attached little significance to church
disciplinary measures instituted by the master, but which they, as Praise
House members, were forced to implement, a crime against one of their
own was a different matter. Long after slavery, the Praise House continued effectively to hold its members responsible for good behavior, and
[694] the influence of these small units of the church has long been credited
for the fact that crimes were rarely committed among Gullahs. In the
794 1920s the Beaufort sheriff stated that the Praise Houses kept Gullahs
law-abiding even as freedpeople, "because the Negro fears the Lord more
621 than he fears the law." Yet it was not "fear" so much as a desire for
harmony and a sense of love and respect for each other that allowed
Gullahs to maintain integrity in the community. The significance of Praise
[626] House loyalty and community membership as a social regulating force
has been observed by researchers as late as the 1970s.[5] Existence of these
[368] plantation meetinghouses conformed to the desires of slaveholders, but
they also served to strengthen bonds of kinship and a sense of commonwealth among the Gullahs.

805 Gullahs often expressed time in terms of before or after they "had
sense." The concept puzzled Northern teachers who worked among them
794 during the Civil War. "Catching sense," as the Gullahs called it, a term
175 still used today on some Sea Islands, refers to the time when a person
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completes the process of joining the Church and Praise House. According 794
to Patricia Guthrie who did field work in the Sea Islands, "entrance 175
into the religious and the politico-jural domains parallels the time when 567
plantation membership becomes fully realized," or when a person "catches [805)
sense." Joining the Praise House formally expressed this initiation into
the plantation domain. An individual was no longer merely a member of
a household but a citizen of the plantation community, and a member of
the Church. Thus personhood was attained through "catching sense."
All members had to answer to the religious court system when discord [795)
arose. The Praise House law was considered the "just law," and when
disputes arose, settlement was reached in the religious court. Praise House [692)
membership demanded that all grievances go before this "Committee."
The "unjust law" was essentially white law.[6] This raises questions about
how plantation membership functioned before widespread Christian
teaching by whites, and before freedom. The benne seed ritual indicates
that before Methodist missionaries came, plantation depredations against
the master did not warrant censure in the slave quarters. It is doubtful (797)
that this changed even after slaves "accepted" white Christianity. Internal
association among any group is more significant than outside forces,
especially if the outside element is an oppressive one. Also, community
leaders did not go about seeking wrongdoers. Instead, cases were reported
by other church members or by individuals involved in the grievance.
Obviously a case brought to the leader's attention by the planter
had to be acted upon. But the Gullahs did not view plantation "discipline"
from the master's perspective, or as "just law."

The religious court heard both sides of a dispute and encouraged the 175
parties to reach an agreement without input from the Praise House leader 795
or other church members. Usually cases were settled at the first level. If 692
not, the case went to the leader and then to the membership. The religious 567
court system was respected and taken seriously. The small amount
of crimes after slavery indicate that few Gullahs came before it and few
wanted to be censored for misconduct. The ultimate aim of the religious
court was to maintain "peace and harmony" in the community. The
Gullahs believed this was best accomplished by settling disputes within
the group. There was strong disapproval of anyone who went to the
master or, after slavery, to the secular authorities. Such a person did not
want a settlement, but to merely create more trouble for the group.[7]

The same attachment to religion and community membership that existed 175
among West Africans was observed among the Gullahs. At the 795
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each other to live as "one body" also allowed them to operate collectively 771
and ward off the demoralizing effects of exploitation. A central element 829
in their religious attitude was a sense of individual honor. Love for their (577)
fellows, and a respectful disposition would find favor with God. This 771
orientation was often expressed in terms of "manners." "A Christian is 576
mannerable," the Gullahs were fond of saying. One Gullah soldier, in
his supplications to heaven, implored, "Let me lib so dat when I die I
shall *bab* manners." Northern teacher Harriet Ware described an old Gullah [567] ●
woman, Widow Bedotte, who had been driven insane by watching her
master whip her daughter to death; "very sad it is to hear her talk," (175)
wrote Ware. Yet, although Widow Bedotte's epithets against her master (794)
and the rebels were voluble and denunciatory, "she prides herself upon
her good manners, which she says she gets because she belongs to the
church, which every now and then she joins again." Charlotte Forten 576
observed the Gullahs' attitude toward each other:

> These people are exceedingly polite in their manner towards each other, each new arrival bowing, scraping his feet and shaking hands with the others, while there are constant greetings such as, "Huddy? How's yer lady?" ("howd' ye do? How's your wife?") The hand-shaking is performed with the greatest possible solemnity. There is never the faintest shadow of a smile on anybody's face during this performance. The children, too are taught to be very polite to their elders, and it is the rarest thing to hear a disrespectful word from a child to his parent, or to any grown person. They have really what the New-Englanders call "beautiful manners."[9]

Despite enslavement and poverty, the Gullahs maintained a generous 621
attitude, never allowing one of their number to go without food or shelter. 592
Kinship was important, but the Gullah concept of a household did 175
not necessarily mean filial attachment, but all those living within a family
and community structure, with the rights, duties, and privileges therein.
While there were many children without parents because of the ravages (736)
of bondage, reportedly there were no orphans on the Sea Islands. Gullahs
were also fond of bestowing presents upon their Northern benefactors, 431
or anyone whom they considered a friend. Gifts of sweet potatoes, 175
peanuts, and eggs which had a special spiritual significance and were
rather expensive, were often offered to visitors. "They feel hurt if their
presents are refused," wrote Laura Towne. "Old Susannah often sends
to table, fish and other extras. They don't want pay. No indeed."[10]

While the Christian example contributed to inspiring a kindred spirit, 000
the Gullah's sense of charity also had another source. African peoples

000 have a tradition of politeness. Among the Limba of Sierra Leone for example, "shame" (Kulaku) and "honor" (yiki) are spoken of often. According respect to leaders, strangers, one's wife, and her relatives, is of great importance. Fear of shame is a very real sanction in everyday life. Rudeness or abusive behavior also brings shame, which only an apology can erase. Ceremonious welcomings involving hand shaking are greatly stressed among Africans. Thanks, greetings, and farewells are often reinforced by a gift, approved of as much for its token value of "giving the words weight," as for its economic worth. A gift of a fowl, eggs, or rice is commonly offered when guests arrive. A physician assigned to the colony of Sierra Leone in the late eighteenth century, wrote that the people possessed a "great share of pride, and are easily affected by an insult." They could not even bear a harsh expression, or raised voice without distaste. One of the severest insults toward an African was to "speak disrespectfully of his mother," which the Africans called "cursing her." More recently, a researcher in the Kongo was told that there were two things he should know right away about BaKongo peoples. "The first is that we all came from Mbaza Kongo. The second is the importance of good manners."[11]

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Aside from a spirit of cooperation, Gullahs used their religion to foster a sense of justice. Undoubtedly, since they were exploited so unjustly on all quarters, it was important that among each other fairness predominate. The power of the community and the extent to which slaves could pursue their indignation against erring members was not always peaceful, and could reach extreme proportions. Jenkins Mikell's recollection of a grisly event on Edisto Island represents a case in point. Crimes within the slave quarters were infrequent, but they did occur:

> Early one morning, we were awakened by the repressed excitement we felt around the dwelling. We soon found that all the people on the home place were in a terribly wrought up state and waiting for the Master to appear. A murder had been committed among them. A man had killed his wife in anger. The poor woman had been found dead hanging by her neck to the rafter of the cabin, and the guilty husband had run away and left her there. He was caught during the day . . . he was tried and convicted and remanded to the scene of his crime for execution. . . . On the day of his execution very little work was done in the community by the negroes. All attended the tragic scene. His coffin was made on the plantation and placed in a wagon. The doomed man, tied, seated upon this coffin rode six miles to the place of execution, and by his side seated on the same gruesome seat was his companion in guilt—a woman. She was made to witness at close quarters his dreadful end. She returned to the place of burial,

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
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> on the plantation, seated on the box containing his dead body, and as the body 175
> was lowered into the grave, she was seized by a frenzied mob, forced into the 567
> open pit and every effort was made to bury her alive. These efforts nearly succeeded. 682
> But wiser counsels prevailed and she was at last released.[12]

In this situation moral judgment within the slave community was not [771]
in keeping with the Christian doctrine of forgiveness that usually characterized the Gullahs' disposition. Instead, it indicates how African influences continued. Apparently, Gullahs believed that some violations
should not be summarily dismissed or forgiven. Among the Windward 000
Coast peoples, no concept of sin seems to have been present. Yet among some, the Mende for example, there was a sense of guilt in two areas of government—breaches in communal laws and regulations, and violation of the rights of those unable to help themselves. The BaKongo considered sin to be a wrong against society, not God, and thus should be
punished by society. The above Gullah crime could be viewed as be- 175
trayal of communal trust, an individual violation, and as an immoral act 682
against the people as a whole. Such violations called for punishment, not 679
only for the offender, but for those closely related to the act.[13] Such irrevocable behavior among the bondspeople could possibly undermine their collective strength and organization, and no doubt Gullahs felt that depravity should be rooted out in a drastic manner as a warning to others
who might be driven to commit such violence. Yet the fact that the [771]
example was an atypical incident demonstrates that adoption of a common socioreligious connection among Gullahs had more of a restraining effect on deviant social behavior than threat of violent retaliation.

In the Gullah slave community the most important people were reli- 17
gious leaders, comprising two groups. One consisted of black elders, and 793
the others were spiritual parents, or the black elders' "help." Black elders 794
were chosen by whites, often by Baptist planters. These black leaders,
referred to as "deacons" or "watchmen" were responsible for "watchcare" 567
of members of the plantation societies. They were the experienced church members in the quarters, having some knowledge of Christianity and probably taking their religion more literally and seriously than their fellow bondspeople. Black elders maintained relatively close contact with the Baptist churches during the last thirty years of bondage, and were exemplary people, managing to walk a thin line between securing the trust and confidence of both masters and slaves.[14] Undoubtedly, to the slaveholders black elders embodied those features of Christianity which,

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they hoped, would encourage obedience, docility, humility, and a "turn-the-other-cheek" attitude. The elders' judgment was important to planters, who realized the influence these leaders exercised. Masters probably depended upon the reasoning power of elders, expecting them to use Christianity as a soothing influence in the slave quarters. Although law forbade black religious gatherings without three slaveholders being present, this edict was grossly violated in the Lowcountry, as probably elsewhere, and black societies were rarely visited by whites supposedly superintending black worship.

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Thus, black elders' duties of oversight, direction, watchcare, and advice were extensive. Since they ultimately had the last word on whether or not the "Christian" character of a "seeker" of religion warranted that individual's being accepted into "de Ark ob Safety," the supremacy of these leaders was considerable.[15] Yet black elders undoubtedly used their position of power with measure, fairness, and to benefit of the slave community, for they always maintained respect among the bondspeople. Their message was one of encouragement and their capacity to inspire moral confidence largely depended upon their verbal ability, gravity of deportment, and consistent record of honesty and correctness. As guardians of the community and articulators of group values, they may have counseled patience and been the main proponents of the Christian attitude of "resignation," which observers attributed to some Gullahs, as a form of protection. Above all, black elders were firm about depredations within the slave quarters, watching closely "to detect some delinquency" or "any shortcomings," yet ready to forgive an errant member.

> They visit, pray with and exhort the sick, rebuke the impenitent, counsel the weak, conduct social meetings for prayer, whenever such meetings are permitted by the proprietor of a plantation, and especially have vigilant watch over the young, striving to keep them in the path of rectitude.[16]

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The other group of religious leaders, spiritual fathers and mothers, were not white-sanctioned leaders of the Praise House, but among the Gullahs they were recognized as legitimate and reportedly had "the most absolute authority over them." They were a continuous foil to Methodist missionaries and often disliked by planters because these religious leaders successfully incorporated non-Christian elements into white Protestantism. From this group came Praise House leaders and the "committee" that acted as the religious court. Thus on an individual plantation, the

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"help" who held Praise House membership, conducted religious services, and oversaw local religious activity was actually more significant than the black elder who might oversee several plantations. Like the elders, spiritual leaders were loved, respected, and faithful in those things pertaining to the welfare of the religious community. The spiritual leaders' influence belonged to a tradition older than the black elders' role.[17] They undoubtedly adjusted to Christianity by making a place for themselves in the heart of it as practiced by Gullahs. Also Baptist elders, though having the interests of the community at heart, may have imbibed too much of the new religion and been too willing to preach and teach conservatism. Thus for the Gullahs, the power of and respect for plantation spiritual parents exceeded that of Baptist-sanctioned elders. The former were healers, interpreters of dreams, signs, and visions, all of which were central to Gullah conceptions of religion and infused with their impressionistic form of Christianity.[18] The functions of the two types of religious leaders may have overlapped to some degree and also complemented each other. They represent different aspects of the Gullahs' spiritual existence—one Christian, the other African—and an element of syncretism within slave religion.

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Examination of Gullah methods of admission to church membership is one key to understanding the significance of the spiritual leader's role, Gullah socioreligious spiritualism, and links with a West African past. A candidate's acceptance into the church and subsequently into the Praise House depended upon relating a satisfactory experience, which was the result of a soul-grappling, traumatic confrontation between the individual and a higher power, culminating, if successful, in a sensation of rebirth and full membership in the religious community. The period of transition between the time a desire to become a Christian was expressed and the acceptance by elders of the religious experience was called "seekin'."

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The name, "seekin'" was introduced to the Gullahs by Methodist missionaries. At meetings with slaves, after preaching and teaching, the Methodists would then inquire if anyone would like to come forward and "seek Jesus." Those who professed such a desire would then go "on trial" and remain in this limbo status until the missionary deemed them ready for baptism. Probationers, or "seekers of religion," were required by Methodists to know the Creed, Sacraments, and Lord's Prayer, and they were "not eligible for baptism until they had learned them under-

175 standingly."[19] It was an impractical expectation, and few of the slaves
795 attempted to provide the missionaries with an "adequate" explanation of
797 religion. Yet true to their adaptive genius, Gullahs embraced the term
567 and devised a unique interpretation of "seeking Jesus" that had little to
do with the Methodists' idea, but which the Baptists accepted as proof
of "Christian" conversion. A critical and frustrated Methodist missionary
175 provided the *Southern Christian Advocate* with a revealing illustration of
787 the slaves' method of determining religious conversion and their "seekin'"
567 process:

> When one of these people becomes serious, or "begins to pray" as he would say,—and this is seldom the result of preaching, but most commonly a "warning in a dream,"—it is customary for him to select, by the direction of "the spirit" of course, with some church member of influence, as his spiritual guide. Females are often chosen. Soon after the "vision" in which his teacher is pointed out, he makes known to him his revelation and puts himself under his instruction. These are of a two-fold nature, answering to the two-fold character of the teacher. He is now a prophet to teach him how to conduct himself, and particularly how to pray. He is also "an interpreter of visions" to whom the seeker relates all his "*travel*." This word *travel* . . . is one of the most significant in their language, and comprehends all those exercises, spiritual, visionary and imaginative, which make up an "experience." . . . These travels may differ in some things; and in others they all agree. Each seeker meets with warnings—awful sights or sounds, and always has a vision of a white man who talks with him, warns him, and sometimes makes him carry a burden, and in the end leads him to the river.
> When the teacher is satisfied with the travel of the seeker, he pronounces "he git thru"; and he is ready for the church. This decision is never questioned by the neophyte. "I prayed under him," says the latter; "he is my spiritual father." Thus the case is settled. The man's religion is endorsed by an authoritative *imprimatur* and heaven is sure. Meanwhile perhaps there has been no solitary conviction of the true nature of sin, no genuine repentance to embitter sin to the soul, no distant apprehension of the sacrifices of the Savior and the merit of his death as the atonement for sin, and the great procuring cause of pardon: in a word, no distant element of Christian experience involved in the whole affair.[20]

The lengthy account failed to mention several other paramount aspects of the "seekin'" experience. First, the seeker was expected, as far as possible, to shun all "social or worldly pleasures." Second, the seeker was required to "go into de wilderness," where the "visions" usually appeared to the candidate and where the travel took place. Solitude and meditation were essential features of the seeking period. Approved and unapproved night vigils were common. Such places as the graveyard,

normally an absolute taboo for Gullahs (except for the occasion of buri- 175
als), cotton or corn fields, and the marshes were favorite praying grounds 787
for seekers. Gullahs believed that "Notin' won't hurt you while you bin 567
seekin'." Yet no matter where one prayed, "in de fields and pine woods," "in de bush," "out doors," or "under live oak," all was defined as "de wilderness." It was not generally possible for slaves to withdraw in the literal sense. Often as a gesture of going into the wilderness they would refrain from social interaction, sometimes not even speaking to family members or friends unless it was absolutely necessary, communicating only with their spiritual leader. It was a time of utter prostration for the seeker. Untidy and exceptionally ragged clothing was worn. Female seekers often covered themselves with ash. Seekers wore a "little white cloth or string," around their heads, "jus to mark deirself diffun'." This had to be worn, unwashed, for the duration of the seeking period. During Northern occupation, despairing teachers remarked that children were taken out of school when they became seekers, and since "de trabbel" usually lasted for months, sometimes the entire school was disrupted. From Hilton Head Island, Elizabeth Botume wrote:

> In the winter most of the children were "seeking and praying." The older people said, "They do hang their heads and pray"; and they were not allowed to do much of anything else for fear they would "be turned back.". . . .
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> These religious revivals were a source of much disturbance in school routine. . . . We cannot call these "religious excitements"; the young seekers were in a stupid and lethargic condition. Some children were not allowed to come to school for fear they would be turned back.[21]

It was not only essential for seekers to relate a satisfactory emotional 175
experience, they also had to declare themselves free of malice toward 787
anyone and ready to abide by rules of the church via society control. 567
Hence the Praise House operated as the extending influence on behavior 795
in the slave quarters. While the seekers' dream experiences varied, they first had to be bad, fearful dreams, which the spiritual parent explained. As the seeker's "experience" neared an end, metamorphosis was indicated by, among other things, a profession of charity for others. This was always an important part of their spiritual affirmation:

> "You think you are converted?"
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> "Yes, . . . I' so lovin! I loves ebery body—all de trees, an' de chicken, an' de peoples; I loves ebery ting an' ebery body. . . ."[22]

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175 567 787 [795] More important than feelings of guilt and sinfulness, so fundamental to Christian conversion, was the seeker's desire to become a part of the community. The more intense the "trabbel" or "vision," the more dramatic the integration into society.

The mystical nature of the slaves' conversion experience involved a travel during which seekers often prayed and spoke to religious nature objects rather than to God.[23] As the Methodist informant noted, this was not linked to a Christian tradition. Literature on the previously discussed [171] secret cultural associations of the Windward Coast peoples is limited, since even today ethnic groups generally refuse to discuss them. Nevertheless, there is enough existing material on this tradition to suggest secret society link with Gullah concepts of conversion, personhood, and group membership as practiced within and reinforced by Christianity.

000 Initiation into the Poro and Sande contained two central components—contact with spirits and extended instruction, both aimed at socialization of the individual and preparation for an active communal role. Among the Kuranko, Mano, Limba, Mende, Temne, Gola, and other ethnic groups, withdrawal from organized society into the bush was clearly related to a type of release through transcendence, commonly expressed as a lonely, spiritual journey or travel on which the initiate becomes acquainted with death. The Poro and Sande were the universal male and female cultural societies of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and parts of Gambia. Boys and girls usually entered the bush school at puberty, but at separate periods and for different lengths of time. Sande initiates, like Gullah females, wore a white head tie, called "the white thing," and covered their faces with white clay while Gullah female seekers used ash. The *Mazowo* (high priestess) always wore white and was envisioned thusly by initiates. Withdrawal from village society was a ritualistic death. Initiates were taken into a sacred designated area of the bush by Poro-Sande priests and priestesses, called altar mothers and fathers. Here they symbolically took leave of earth and journeyed down into the spirit world, the world of the dead. Among some groups, the Mano, for example, these spirits were ancestors. For others, the Kuranko and Limba, they were spirits the initiates encountered, spirits who were nameless, capricious, quais-human nature beings sometimes occupying streams, rivers, and mountains. In any case, contact with these spirits represented a form of demise and in their realm initiates dwelled during the entire period of segregation. The boys and girls conversed with the spirits and related these

code of the society could be imposed upon leaders by society members. 000
The zo were the principal characters in the society, and were charged with protecting the traditions and institutions of the group. The zo people had a "majestic status." They were respected by chiefs and elders, and "honored with intense devotion by the youth of the land." In personal characteristics a zo was "chivalrous, courteous, public spirited, law-abiding and fearless." The zo was also a teacher of "native lore, arts, and crafts." He or she had full knowledge of the history and traditions of the people. Above all, the zo were "authentic" judges of all matters pertaining to the people's welfare.[26]

As role models these African leaders correspond to some extent with 175
Gullah elders. But there is an even closer relation between zo and Gullah 171
spiritual parents to whom the slaves looked for guidance and who main- 567 ●
tained such "absolute authority" over them. Laura Towne wrote: 792

> I went to-day to see Maum Katie, an old African woman who remembers 554
> worshipping her own gods in Africa but who has been nearly a century in this
> country. She is bright and talkative, a great "spiritual mother," a fortune teller, (791)
> or rather prophetess, and a woman of tremendous influence over her spiritual
> children.

Similarly, Harriet Ware was acquainted with "Old Peggy, the 'leader' 175
from Fripp Point." Ware was told that "Old Peggy and Binah" were the 567
two "whom all that came into the Church, had come through, and the 554
Church supports (takes care of) them." Thus the Methodist missionary 791
correctly assessed the role and power of women diviners in Gullah church 792
membership. A further example of female influence in the sacred-secular world of slaves is provided by Francis Kemble. An old woman on the Butler plantations named Sinda, reigned as a prophetess among the slaves for many years and acquired as ascendency over them. When she declared the world would soon end, "her assertion took such possession of the people on the estate that they refused to work, and the rice and cotton fields were threatened with an indefinite fallow in consequence of this strike on the part of the cultivators." The overseer, realizing the impossibility of attempting force, waited until the appointed day arrived. Sinda' prediction proved false and no emancipation was forthcoming. The people went back to work and Sinda, in a fallen state, was "tremendously flogged."[27] 175

It is difficult to discern where one type of socioreligious leadership 567
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175 began among the Gullahs and the other ended, or if in slavery a shared
567 authority and governance was practiced. Among Windward Coast Afri-
554 cans authority rested with two bodies—the chief and his elders, and cul-
000 tural authority, which consisted of Poro and Sande leaders. The latter
was called the Poro Council. "All grave and problematic questions touching
the interest of the section or tribe in general were handled by this Poro
Council, and their decisions, after due deliberation, were preemptory."
Among the BaKongo, governance was far more centralized and hierar-
chical. Authority was in the hands of a king, and on the village level, a
chief, who might have advisers, among whom was a medicine man *(Nganga
Nkisi)*.[28] But the importance of the priest in all African societies may
explain the continued presence of the spiritual parents. Because spiritual
parents, like their African counterparts, held their positions for life, and
since they comprised the "religious court," they possibly represented the
communal soul of the people while the elder personified the individual
175 soul in a more Christian context. From the spiritual leader a Gullah can-
didate not only received religious guidance but also instruction in con-
554 duct or "manners," thus preserving values as well as maintaining author-
575 ity. Different social conditions make it impossible to actually compare
types of instruction given to African and Gullah initiates. But in both
situations such qualities as good conduct, allegiance, generosity, and group
responsibility were emphasized. Secret society initiates received a rich
background in physical survival, social interaction, instruction in ethnic-
group history, and art. They were also schooled in their particular oc-
cupation for the future. For Gullah "seekers," instruction was probably
a mixture of Christianity, Africanisms, and practical information. Can-
didates were taught how to pray, an interpretation of the nature of God
and Christ, concepts about death, and especially about the realities of
life, all within a context relevant to their circumstances as bondspeople.[29]

000 When African initiates left the bush, they returned to the village as "reborn," and were said to have "crossed the water." Their former existence was obliterated—old animosities, debts, even crimes no longer existed. The person was entering a new life with new responsibilities. Neophytes were expected to take their place in the village, to serve it when called upon, and to obey its regulations as interpreted by the Poro Council. When initiates were led back to the village, they underwent a washing ceremony in the creek or river. After "washing," new members were dressed up for their final return. Parents publicly expressed pride

adding to a collective attitude in the quarters. Total immersion was ex- 175
clusively their way of being baptized and, although a Christian service, 794
the pomp, color, and ceremony was original to the slaves. The Gullahs' 795
method of baptism, with its solemn pageantry, had African antecedents
as well as Christian form. But more important, from the slaves' point of [567)
view, the rite was uniquely a prerequisite for community stature within their own society.

Gullah efforts to construct an organized harmonious social system was 175
further illustrated by the fact that, while collective affiliation in the slave 794
quarters was most significant, a sense of individual fulfillment was also 795
essential. Hence, while "seekin'" culminated in acceptance of socializa- 567
tion through church membership, the experience itself was a private one
and the desire to "seek Jesus" was a slave's personal decision, although 175
not devoid of community pressure. The travel, the visions, and the sol- 771
itude possibly represented a bondsperson's inner reflection and recogni- 794
tion of "self" as opposed to his or her treatment as "thing" by the master. 567
Efforts toward acquiring a valuable self-image is related in the slave's
dependence on the spiritual parent who listened to and interpreted indi- [787)
vidual experiences. The significance of individual experience also had its source in the personal attachment to and identification with Christ, prophets, and disciples rather than to perceived abstractions and inapplicable doctrines within Christianity. Moreover, Gullah cultural achievements represent manifestations of individual creativity as well as collective will and fortitude.

In the Gullah socioreligious community, exclusiveness served collec- 175
tive goals perhaps in the way that secrecy in Poro and Sande expressed 794
loyalty, solidarity, and trust. One illustration of this was the practice of 779
close communion among Gullahs. Close communion was actually an elit-
ist doctrine which the slaves apparently adopted from their Calvinist- 567
oriented Baptist slavemasters. American Missionary Association minis- 797
ters stated that the Gullahs practiced close communion before they came. "I find that the colored people understand the doctrine of 'close communion' perfectly well," wrote the Reverend Augustine Roots from Port Royal in 1863. "I have however said, myself nothing about the matter of communion." This was not the opinion of Laura Towne. She related that a white Baptist minister, Mr. Horton, informed the Gullahs that no one "who taught different doctrines" had any right "even to stand in the pulpit." Horton further told the Gullahs that those with different reli-

175 gious persuasions "had no right" to come to church communion. Many
794 Northern teachers were Unitarians. Others followed no faith. Still, they
779 enjoyed the Gullah church services and felt that the bondspeople wanted
them at communion. In any case a denominational feud erupted in the
• 567 occupied area. Some Gullahs did not agree with the exclusion practice,
· 797 and insisted that white antebellum Baptists and Episcopalians even communed together in the Sea Island region, and no doctrinal proscription was made. "So," wrote Towne, "Mr. Horton has not the excuse he gave for his course, that it was already established." After creating the issue Mr. Horton left the region and Mr. Phillips came in his place. Phillips sided with Northern teachers and missionaries. Towne, a Unitarian, stated that the "Reverend Mr. Phillips was here today and says the elders asked by what right we stayed to communion." Phillips interceded on behalf of the teachers, but met firm resistance. "Mr. Phillips . . . says the elders decided to exclude us from communion," related Towne. Later, the teachers continued to press the issue with an influential Gullah leader:

> Nelly had today, I think, a long talk with Demas upon close communion, but he was immovable, as might be supposed. He did not think much of the theological arguments of a girl like Nelly; and he is perfectly unbending by nature."

For a people whose knowledge of Christian doctrine was marginal, and whose spiritual nature was one of warmth and generosity, it was uncharacteristic of the Gullahs to embrace staunchly such a rigid theological doctrine. If close communion was not a concept introduced to the Gullahs by Baptist masters, their use of the concept is even more interesting and further illustrates their adaptive capacity. Yet it was practiced all over the region. Gullahs continued to follow the close communion model, scolding members who worshiped outside of their religious structure. While they frequently invited and always welcomed white Northern missionaries and others to "jine praise wid we," the Gullahs remained adamant about refusing communion to those not of their faith.
175 Perhaps Gullahs interpreted the ritualistic sacrament as a private cere-
794 mony among church members and believed that its usefulness in foster-
567 ing unity and harmony among believers was best served by keeping oth-
ers out of fellowship. This included white non-Baptists as well as black
779 nonbelievers. The one construst resembling law, custom, practice, and
system that Gullahs could consider their own was their religious societies and the beliefs contained therein. Black societies were indeed "invisible

institutions," and they were controlled from within. While confusion and 175 vacillation occurred in other areas, within Gullah black societies there 794 was organization, structure, and a cameraderie transferable to the slave 567 quarters. Religion was their "fixed point" and the one realm where they 779 needed authority if a group attitude was to be maintained. The concept of close communion was not completely new, given the African heritage. And black elders insisted that only members of the societies had a right to fellowship, for probably no event more symbolized integration of the individual into the socioreligious connection than acceptance of the elements representing the mystical blood and body of Christ. This ritual bound members of the various societies. The more exclusive the event, the more it impressed upon the communicants the responsibilities entailed. By joining society, Praise House, and church, an individual became a full participant in the community. Communion service epitomized this relationship. Communion was not only a method of initiating new converts into the socioreligious connection, but a way of reminding old members of their commitments. In addition to being "de Ark ob Safety" in the spiritual sense, communion was possibly a conduct agreement, restricting antisocial behavior yet inspiring a feeling of personal status very much in the way that Poro and Sande did in West Africa. Gullahs and Africans used their religion to fulfill sacred and secular communal [771] needs in similar ways. In both instances the main emphasis was [171] on community preservation. In each case an institution evolved that initiated individuals into society and committed them to abide by the customs, beliefs, and practices of the group for the sake of unity and order, while not ignoring the members' need to maintain a sense of self.

Once the candidates were baptized and given communion, they were 175 then members of the black society and the plantation Praise House. This 567 new status gave former candidates the right to participate in the ring 794 shout which was held at the praise meeting or in the home of the individual 796 considered to be the most pious. One of the earliest available antebellum description of the ring shout was provided by Charles Lyell, who traveled through the South Carolina and Georgia Sea Islands in 1848. According to Lyle, on the Hopeton plantation of James Hamilton Couper, over twenty violins were silenced by the Methodist missionar- [797] ies. Thus was music and dancing, the slaves' chief form of merrymaking, prohibited. Yet Methodists did allow slaves to engage in a form of physical exercise after prayer meetings, hence the origin of the "shout":

175 567 794 796 797

> At the Methodist prayer-meetings, they are permitted to move round rapidly in a ring, joining hands in token of brotherly love, presenting the right hand and then the left, in which maneuver, I am told, they sometimes contrive to take enough exercise to serve as a substitute for the dance, it being in fact a kind of spiritual boulanger.[36]

Physical expressions of religious fervor had been a feature of eighteenth-century Methodism. But the phenomenon had for the most part disappeared by the time of the Methodist slave conversion movement. While most Methodist missionaries frowned upon slaves' religious expressions, others heeded the instruction of William Capers, superintendent of missions, to allow the slaves to "be themselves" in matters of worship, so long as they abided by the discipline.[37] Hence, although worldly entertainment was forbidden, in some cases religious exercise was not. Baptist planters may have permitted the shout to exist because they saw no harm in such behavior and recognized the therapeutic effects of such "periodic releases." Thus, the shout ritual, among other [154] things, can be seen as a cathartic which enabled slaves to act out tensions, anxieties, and suppressed facets of themselves in an approved manner.

While Gullahs considered the shout to be a religious, even Christian practice, it was their own creation. At the Praise House, shouts only took place after service had ended and the benediction announced. Also, [533] while Gullahs sang Methodist and Baptist hymns at the praise meetings, when time came for a shout, the slaves sang only their own spirituals.[38]

175 567 796 786 535 533

Some accounts of the shout indicate that three or four people stood and sang, clapping and gesticulating, while others shuffled along on their heels, following each other in a circle, bending the knees slightly. The movements began slowly, a few going around and others joining in vocally and kinetically, while the song became faster and faster, "till at last only the most marked part of the refrain is sung and the shuffling, stamping and clapping get furious." According to Laura Towne, the floor shook dangerously, swaying rhythmically in time with the song. The dancers would get out of breath only after long periods of time, rest for awhile, and begin again, as the several outside of the ring kept up the singing. Charlotte Forten, a black teacher from the North, added color and imagery to the shout scene she witnessed:

> . . . at the close of the Praise-Meeting, they all shake hands in the most solemn manner. Afterward, as a kind of appendix, they have a grand "shout" during

which they sing their own hymns. . . . The first shout that we witnessed . . . 175
impressed us very much. The large gloomy room, with its blackened walls—the 567 ●
wild whirling dance of the shouters,—the crowd of dark, eager faces gathered 796
around,—the figure of the old blind man, whose excitement could hardly be
controlled, and whose attitude and gestures while singing were very fine—and 786
over all, the red glare of the burning pine-knot, which shed a circle of light 535
around it, but only seemed to deepen and darken the shadows in the other parts 533
of the room,—these all formed a wild, strange, and deeply impressive picture, not soon to be forgotten."[39]

Only members of the Praise House could join in the ring shout. Children 175
were taught the shout at a very early age but never allowed to 794
participate in or attend religious gatherings where the shout was performed 796
until they became Praise House members. Once membership (869)
was attained, the new converts were welcomed into the Praise House by the opportunity to lead the ring shout and illustrate their ability.[40]

Most Northern teachers were at first appalled when they observed the 175
shout. "I never saw anything so savage," wrote Laura Towne. "They 796
call it a religious ceremony, but it seems more like a regular frolic to me." "The shout reminds one of a pagan performance," wrote a Ladies Island teacher. Arthur Sumner referred to it as "a strange, barbaric Central-African dance and song." Yet Gullahs insisted that the shout was religious and that each movement and step had spiritual significance. The steps never changed and even after freedom the shout was not altered by maneuvers that might have been learned at a "worldly dance." A watchful leader made sure that the feet were never crossed. Some whites, after coming to know and understand the Gullahs, reversed their initial critical stance. Laura Towne spent the rest of her life with the Gullahs after going there during the Civil War. She grew to love and respect the Gullahs enough to appreciate their forms of expression. "Went to a fine shout today," she wrote in her diary after a few years' stay on the Sea Islands.[41]

The Gullah ring shout, like the travel and the vision, involved an altered 175
state of consciousness and had the attributes of "possession." It 796
represented either an unusual behavior inspired and controlled by an 786
outside agent, in this case the Holy Spirit, or the outside agent displaced 787
the individual's personality and acted in its stead.[42] The background of the Gullah ring shout, a manifestation of possession trance, was West African in origin and an important characteristic of the initiation process.

or "Com' on, let's git indey widdem." The others joined in, now paying little attention to the new members. The three initiates, while no longer leading the shout, were "determined boys in their teens," and seemed bent on holding the center of attention. They clapped and stamped louder, and again assumed leadership of the group of shouters: 796 786 787 794 533

> Clear, distinct, and strong their treble voices took up the shout song. Above all the voices in the room theirs could be heard singing "De bell dun rung, de bell dun rung, de bell dun rung." Catching the contagious enthusiasm of these youthful voices, the others in the ring and those around the wall sang louder and louder. Yet above the rhythmic thud of the heels of the shouters as they jerked themselves around the circle in perfect two-four time, above the deafening din of the hand clapping, above the boisterous laughter and giggling of those who had stepped outside to "cool off" and were pressing one another against the quivering window sill of the open windows was heard the initiates with a note of frenzy in their shrill clear voices as they screamed the shout song, "De bell dun rung, de bell dun rung, de bell dun rung," which many of their associates in the circle were incoherently muttering with apparently little effort toward articulation. Just as a whirling dynamo generates a magnetic field, so this vibrant circle varying in diameter according to the endurance of the participants turning on, and on, seemed to create a desire which could not be satisfied until each one yielded to the irrestible urge to "git in dey widdem."[44]

The shout as a form of expression may have been a way of reconciling 154 contradictory tendencies among individuals. Certainly not all of the participants 796 were identically inspired, but probably had a number of different, authentic, subjective motivations and sought an outlet in a similar type of collective behavior. Hence, on the conscious level, the West African tradition notwithstanding, engaging in a ring shout had a variety of appeals for the Gullahs as slaves. It was a form of entertainment, a substitute for the social activity they were forced to relinquish, an individual release for pent-up frustrations and hostilities, a dimension of their religious spirit which linked them to natural and supernatural forces, and a mode of liaison among themselves. The following antebellum account 175 of a Christmas shout on one of the Barnwell Sea Island plantations provides 796 insight into the multifaceted meaning of this ceremony for the Gullahs: 567

> The Negroes never went to sleep on the night before Xmas. They held prayers all night in the largest house at the settlement. This was Daddy January's house. Jack (foreman) could read and also August Baker our houseservant. Our mother had given both of them Testaments and Prayerbooks. I can still recall very dis-

175 tinctly the scene. The benches had all been taken outside to make a clear floor.
796 The table with the books was shoved into a corner. A brilliant fire of lightwood was blazing in the chimney and a torch of the same hung in a tin bucket in a
567 corner. Under this bucket the leader stood. She was a visitor. She was 50 or 60 years old, black and scrawney, only a few teeth left in her head. She had been
[786] singing for hours but still went on like one possessed. Gleaming with perspiration from head to heel—her dress at the bosom thrown wide open her head thrown back eyes closed, teeth prominent, head kerchief loose and hanging arms bare, clapping and shouting with a shrill ringing voice. I can recall in most of the other Negroes each with a different step, individual and characteristic. Some very much in earnest almost reverential, some heavy and stupid and some enjoying the fun. My grandmother's coachman "Sam" particularly, very black, good looking, smart and mischievous. I can recall the gleam of his eyes as he grinned at us in passing and improvised some peculiar contractions for our special benefit.[45]

771 For the Gullahs, then, the Christian experience was a means of communal fulfillment on the individual as well as collective level, and plan-
567 tation life had aspects of an African village in microcosm. Gullahs attempted to exert control over their environment just as their African
177 forbears had. For Africans it was a hostile natural ambiance that most threatened the group. For slaves it was an oppressive socioeconomic system that challenged their will to develop self-esteem and social cohesion. Gullahs successfully met that challenge and rose above bondage in a spir-
[178] itual and communal sense. By combining the edifying features of Christianity and African culture and philosophy, they created a practical folk religion that served them well, under the travail of slavery.

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461
● 567

Women and children in the evening after "Maussa's" task is done. (Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society, New York.)

[p. 304]

implies that earthly death is the setting of the sun, or the third moment. 000 Death was not the end of life, nor the cemetery a final resting place, but a door *(mwelo)* between two worlds. The fourth moment is midnight on earth when the sun is shining on the world of the dead. Here rebirth takes place. In any case, no matter what the unconscious motivation, what many considered to be a weakness among these bondspeople was actually a source of strength. They overcame a fear of death in light of the reality of its dominant presence among them, and through their realization that they, more so than most people, were often powerless to alter its course. Thus, while Gullahs did not shirk from death, they were 761 sensitive to the degree to which their lives were exploited, and aware that oppression often caused an untimely end to life. The depth of their 533 understanding of their position was sometimes grippingly demonstrated. Teacher William Allen was struck by how much the children sang of pain and death. Little "Margaret" came to the well to draw her pail of water. Putting it on her head, she walked off singing "shall I die—shall I die." She was followed by Tom and Abraham "galloping along on bamboo horses and shouting, 'my body rock 'long feber.' " Charlotte Forten was much affected by one of the hymns which she heard Gullah [539) children singing:

> I wonder where my mudder gone;
>   Sing, O graveyard!
> Graveyard ought to know me;
>   Ring, Jerusalem!
> Grass grow in de graveyard;
>   Sing, O graveyard!
> Graveyard ought to know me;
>   Ring, Jerusalem!
>
> It is impossible to give any idea of the deep pathos of the refrain,—
> "Sing, O Graveyard."[1]

The pathos is there certainly, but the sense of hope, so characteristic of the Gullahs, is also present in the words "Grass grow in de graveyard." This could indicate that, in the BaKongo tradition, although there was death, there was also life and rebirth. The refrain "Graveyard ought (787) to know me" might refer to the slaves' previous journey to the world of [567] the dead as "seekers." The phrase could also recognize the omnipresence of death among the slaves.

761 Another spiritual expressed a sense of optimism and a superior atti-
533 tude toward death:
(539)

O Massa Death,
He's a very little man,
He goes from door to door;
He kills some souls,
and he woundeth some.
Good Lord remember me;
Good Lord remember me;
Remember me as the years roll round,
Good Lord, remember me.[2]

771 In Christian belief the finality of death was often negated. One of the
761 most appealing aspects of Christianity for Gullahs was the expectation
of a better life after death. This afterlife was not visualized in the African
177 sense, that an individual's status would not differ from one's mortal po-
797 sition. Instead, Gullahs strongly adopted the Christian concept of heaven,
where all "true believers" would sit on "Christ's right side." For obvious
775 reasons, this was one of the tenets of Christianity they most cherished.[3]
● 567 While their African world view encouraged Gullahs to take a rich, posi-
tive attitude toward life, through Christian influence they expected a
better life as payment for their suffering. As one person expressed it:

> De harder me cross to bear down here de better I go be prepare to tek me place in dat Happy Land where all is 'joicin, an' when I git dere, I want de Lord to say, "Ophelia . . . come an' rest wid de elect ob de Lord!"[4]

There was little in Gullah prayers or songs to indicate they feared the tribunal expected to reward the "faithful" and damn the "sinners." Thus they disregarded that portion of their religious instruction which strenuously emphasized a judgment day where "every theft or falsehood" would be brought to light and held against them. What was more important to the Gullahs was a change in their conditions. Just as Baptist slavemaster Daniel Pope queried Marcus, the Praise House elder, as to whether the Gullahs really believed Christ wanted "black nigger in heben," so were slaves convinced that the "Kingdom of God" would have almost no white subjects. Gullah Christianity was one of recompense. Slaves accepted the Christian doctrine of eternal life but modified it so that heaven was an exclusive place, primarily available to sufferers of the right hue as expressed by a former slave:

> It is impossible to reconcile the mind of the native slave to the idea of living in 567
> a state of perfect equality, and boundless affection with white people. Heaven 771
> will be no heaven to him, if he is not to be avenged of his enemies. I know, from
> experience, that these are fundamental rules of his religious creed; because I 177
> learned them in the religious meetings of the slaves themselves. A favorite and kind master or mistress may now and then be admitted into heaven, but this rather as a matter of favor, due to the intercession of some slave, than as a matter of strict justice to the whites, who will, by no means be of an equal rank with those who shall be raised from the depths of misery, in this world.
>
> The idea of a revolution in the conditions of the whites and the blacks, is the cornerstone of the religion of the latter; and indeed it seems to me, at least, to be quite natural, if not in strict accordance with the precepts of the Bible.[5]

Although the Gullahs did not fear death, they recognized its power; 761
and the passing of one of their number had a profound effect on the
community. As has been noted, Methodist missionaries observed this (797)
and often tried to use the drama of death among the Gullahs to "bind
them to the cross."[6] But while the Gullahs' perception of life after death (177)
was essentially of Christian origin, many practices associated with the (778)
dying and the dead were derived from African antecedents.

When death was expected, the plantation community felt compelled 763
to enter into the spirit of the event and vicariously involve themselves in the death throes of the individual, lest when their time came they have to face the ordeal alone, or the deceased, dissatisfied with the send-off, would return and bring evil. The dying person was surrounded by the community, who offered comfort and support. "We got tuh help him cross de ribber," the Gullahs would say. Friends of the dying were expected to bring gifts even though the sufferer could not use them. Such offerings were usually edibles "tuh taste de mou't," but never flowers. Singing, praying, and pious conversation filled the cabin nightly. It was not a solemn time unless sad or obscure circumstances caused the death, but rather was somewhat cheerful, and the subject of death itself was not neglected. Everyone was expected to hold forth as part of the ritual of coaching the dying person to report a heavenly visit or some other evidence of "dying good." When the sufferer drew the last breath, everyone present gave a loud shriek as notification that another soul "done crossed ober." Many Northern teachers were repulsed at the Gullah "deathwatch":

> This practice of sitting up all night with the dying, H. W. [Harriet Ware] justly enough condemns as "heathenish." "The houses cannot hold them all, of course,

000 and taking possession of them. Among the BaKongo, the curse of the dying is much dreaded, especially that of a relative, for the deceased will soon enter the spirit world. A dying person may admonish those around to take care of his or her affairs. "If you do not, I shall fetch you, and you will not become old here on earth." The dying one may also request the living to "wrap me well in the cloth that I leave," may insist that the living hold many lamentations after the death and care for the deceased's family. If not properly buried, the deceased might bring *kindoki* (evil).[12]

• 567 A curious example of the application of both African and Christian
practices among the slaves is provided by a former South Carolina
763 bondsman. According to the informant, a good-looking and very popular
slave girl named Mary became ill and died after a lingering illness of four
or six months' duration. The slaves on the surrounding plantations were
[754] sure that Mary had been conjured (poisoned) by a rival in a love triangle.
The plantation proprietor, a Methodist minister, had Mary treated by
[759] his brother, a practicing physician. While the doctor was attending Mary,
the slaves appealed to their own doctor, a plantation slave who also treated
567 the young woman. But Mary died, and, according to the author, her
funeral, which as was traditional took place at night, "was the largest
764 ever held in all that region of the country":

> The coffin, a rough home-made affair, was placed upon a cart, which was drawn
> by an old Gray, and the multitudes formed in a line in the rear, marching two
> deep. The procession was something like a quarter of a mile long. Perhaps every
> fifteenth person down the line carried an uplifted torch. As the procession moved
> [533] slowly toward "the lonesome graveyard" down by the side of the swamp, they
> sung the well-known hymn of Dr. Issac Watts:
>
> "When I can read my title clear
> To mansions in the skies,
> I bid farewell to every fear
> And wipe my weeping eyes."
>
> [789] Mary's baby was taken to the graveyard by its grandmother, and before the
> corpse was deposited in the earth, the baby was passed from one person to another
> across the coffin. The slaves believed that if this was not done it would be
> [775] impossible to raise the infant. The mother's spirit would come back for her baby
> and take it to herself.
>
> After this performance the corpse was lowered into the grave and covered, each
> [533] person throwing a handful of dirt into the grave as a last farewell act of kindness
> to the dead, and while this was being done the leader announced that other
> hymn by Dr. Watts:

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(533)

> "Hark! from the tomb a doleful sound
> My ears, attend the cry;
> Ye living men, come view the ground
> Where you must shortly lie."
>
> . . . A prayer was offered. . . . This concluded the services at the grave. No burial or commital service was read. . . . At a subsequent time, when all the relatives and friends could be brought together a big funeral sermon was preached by some of the antebellum negro preachers.

The presence of a plantation slave "doctor" is reminiscent of the BaKongo *nganga*, who employed life-affirming *nkisi* to heal and ward off bad medicine or *kindoki*. The charm did not work for the plantation slave, and the large funeral turn-out may represent the people's desire to protect themselves from whatever evil had caused Mary's death as well as to express their respect. Passing the woman's baby back and forth over her coffin was a well-known Gullah graveside custom. "Dead moder will hant de baby," Gullahs explained, and "worry him in his sleep." A similar custom among the BaKongo was women crossing back and forth over the graveside of a woman who died in childbirth, hoping that such a fate would not befall them. Singing at the grave was also part of the BaKongo send-off. The funeral, a lavish affair, would take place when all members of the clan could gather and when enough food could be collected.[13] 764 171

Thus another aspect of Gullah religion was a syncretic blend of belief in the efficacy of Christian salvation, the prevalence of the living dead, and the awesome powers of conjuration. It was sometimes difficult to determine where they believed the most power rested. At any rate, their expression, "Love God and fear the devil" indicates that, as a precautionary measure, they preferred to respect the authority and domain of both. For Gullahs saw no contradiction in being firm proponents of the Baptist faith and protecting themselves against forces of the supernatural as well. In spite of the Gullahs' strong profession of Christianity, Laura Towne noted that "They believe in the evil eye, and also in the power of a good eye for healing," and that "they are afraid of being alone at night, or of sleeping alone, for fear 'the hag will ride we.' " A slaveholding South Carolina minister remembered Elihu, a "devout, old creditable deacon" of the church and highly respected exhorter in the slave quarters. Upon passing the old man's cabin, the owner observed an inverted horseshoe over the door. Since Elihu's skill as a hostler was well known, the owner 771 177 (754) (755) 771 789

771 assumed that the horseshoe was a "professional sign." However, the in-
789 signia was instead a charm against supernatural agencies:

> "What is that over your door Elihu?"
> "Dat for witches, Massa."
> "For what?"
> "Witches, Massa. Nebber sleep, no how, widout horseshoe to keep out de witches.[14]

761 177 178 Thus, besides the Christian version of immortality, elements of African tradition also accounted for the Gullahs' attitude toward death, as indeed it did in their attitude about life. As previously stated, existence of spirits of the deceased was not only central to African ontology, but these beings constituted the largest group of religious intermediaries. Hence, Africans viewed death as perhaps the most important rite of passage rather than as the demise of life. Death was a momentous transition, requiring demonstrative evidence that the physical presence of the deceased would be missed. But it was just as necessary to celebrate this passage into the spirit world in a manner that indicated a continued existence. Africans believed that the spirit which survived the body was conscious of all earthly events and had the power to exercise influence over the destiny of the living. Consequently, the death of a clan member was observed with greatest respect and the death commemoration had to be expressed collectively.[15]

769 Ancestors were said to retain their normal human passions and appetites which had to be gratified in death as they had been in life. Ancestors felt hunger and thirst. They became angry or happy depending on the behavior of their living "children." If neglected, the living dead were vindictive, but propitious if respected. Just as filial loyalty prevents one from allowing a parent to go hungry, "so must food be offered to the
000 ancestors." Among the BaKongo, food was put out immediately after the burial and palm wine poured over the grave. Survivors believed the deceased would eat the food, and bless those who placed it there.[16]

764 Among the Gullahs, even for one who "died good," the spirit could not rest if something had been left behind which it desired. It was observed that the Gullahs and other African-Americans placed articles on newly formed graves. These objects were usually personal belongings, broken pottery and porcelain, playthings, lighting utensils, objects per-
(567) taining to medicine, food, and water. According to the antebellum mem-

ories of Telfair Hodgson, a number of her father's slaves came directly from Africa. The slaves' graves were "always decorated with the last articles used by the departed, and broken pitchers, and broken bits of colored glass were considered even more appropriate than the white shells from the beach nearby." Sometimes the slaves also carved "wooden figures like images of idols," or put a "patchwork quilt" on the grave. One twentieth-century investigator, Samuel Lawton, was told by a number of Sea Island ministers that it was also a common custom to bury articles along with the dead: 764 567

> You must not think that just because you do not find anything on those graves that the relatives did not put some things in there. It is most likely that they have a number of things buried with the body. I have often, at the burials I have conducted, seen the relatives pour hamper baskets full of things right down on top of the coffin before the dirt is shoveled into the grave.[17]

The custom of putting objects both in and on top of graves can be traced to African origins. The Ovimbundu place articles such as baskets, gourds, and instruments used in the burial on top of grave sites. Peoples in the Kongo were said to "mark the final resting-places of their friends by ornamenting their graves with crockery, empty bottles, old cooking-pots, etc." Many ethnic groups of the Windward Coast believed that it was necessary to provide the dead with various gifts, domestic articles, and clothing that could be of use in the life beyond the grave. Such articles, along with food and water, would be left at the grave, so that the spirit of the deceased would come and claim them.[18] 764 171

Although the Gullahs believed in two spirits, it was the "trabblin" spirit rather than the heaven-going spirit which caused the greatest concern. The reasons given for grave adornment clearly indicate the African precedent. One informant related: 774 775 (171)

> Yo' see, suh, everybody got two kinds ob speerits. One is der hebben-goin' speerit. . . . Den dere is de trabblin' speerit. . . . De hebben-goin' speerit don't gib you no trouble, but de trabblin' speerit, 'e be de one dat gib you worriment. E come back to de t'ings 'e like. E try fur come right back in de same house.[19]

Some Africans regarded their essential being as divided into "little me in the big me." Apparently "little me" existed before life and would continue to exist after death in the spirit world. This relates to the Gullah informant's idea of two kinds of spirits. The heaven-going spirit, "little me," depending on how one died, would, after death, rest in the

771 representing honor, constancy, harmony, and perfection, while humanity
776 occupied the center, ever striving to be godlike through a sense of
171 love, community, kinship, and cooperation. In addition, the good and
bad of the spirit world existed in both traditions although it was far more
complex for Africans than for Gullahs. These beings included superhumans,
animals, and objects without biological life.[10] Gullahs applied the
771 African ontology, adapted Christianity and bondage to it, and created a
religion that employed spirituality as a means of self-preservation and as
177 a vital component of community life. It is, then, to the Gullahs' credit
that though circumstances prevented them from rising up against slavery,
they did not succumb to white cultural domination. Instead, they
successfully rose above many of the negative ingredients of Christianity
while assimilating certain other attributes which were synthesized with
African culture. In bondage, Gullahs achieved elevation on the level of
• [567] personal culture and the molding of community values. The edifying
qualities of Gullah religious belief must be seen as having contributed
much to that achievement, just as an element of truth must be recognized
in the assertion that insofar as people develop their own culture
they are not slaves.[11]

Epilogue

Slavery chain done broke at last!
Broke at last! Broke at last!
Slavery chain done broke at last!
Gonna praise God till I die!

Way up in that valley,
Pray-in' on my knees,
Tell-in' God a-bout my troubles,
And to help me if He please.

I did tell him how I suffer,
In the dungeon and the chain;
And the days I went with head bowed down,
An' my broken flesh and pain.

I did know Jesus heard me, 539
'Cause the spirit spoke to me,
An' said, "Rise, my chile, your children
An' you too shall be free."

I done 'p'int one mighty captain
For to marshal all my hosts;
An' to bring my bleeding ones to me,
An' not one shall be lost."

Now no more weary trav'lin',
'Cause my Jesus set me free,
An' there's no more auction block for me
*Since He give me liberty.**

The Thirteenth Amendment, which ended all slavery in the United States, 175
barely slipped through the House of Representatives with the necessary 567 •
two-thirds vote on January 31, 1865. But for the Gullahs, the "Year of
Jubilo" was January 1, 1863, when Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation
Proclamation declared them "forever free." It was the first truly Happy 175
New Year the Gullahs ever had, and they marked it with a festive oc-
casion organized by General Saxton. The celebration took place in Beau- 541
fort. The multitude consisted of the "First South" Regiment, many "white 567
visitors," superintendants, officers, dignitaries, and the band of the Eighth
Maine. From the Islands and surrounding mainland came the now for-

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* Quoted from Leon Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 167.

175 541 567 mer slaves, "chiefly colored woman with gay handkerchiefs on their heads, and a sprinkling of men" (since most able-bodied males were in the army). All the blacks reportedly "had the bearing and distinct respectable look they always had on Sundays and holidays." The services began with a prayer. The Emancipation Proclamation was read by William Brisbane, a South Carolinian who freed his slaves before the war. Then the chaplin presented the colors to the regiment—all according to program. After the chaplin's introductory remarks, and just as Higginson "took and waved the flag," but before he began to speak, the "unexpected," and "startling" occurred. A "strong" but "cracked and elderly" male voice was heard. Instantly, two female voices blended in as if by "an impulse too strong to be repressed." They sang:

My Country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing!

They went on "verse after verse" as the people on the platform appeared stunned. "It seemed the choked voice of a race at last unloosed," Higginson wrote. The rest of the blacks joined in and the whites also began, but Higginson motioned the latter to silence. "I never saw anything so electric," he wrote. "It made all other words seem cheap." "Art," wrote Higginson, "could not have dreamed of a tribute to the day of Jubilee . . . history will not believe it . . . tears were everywhere." Corporal Robert Sutton, a favorite of Higginson's, spoke, vowing that no black soldier would rest until all his brothers and sisters were free. "Boys," he vowed, "we will take Christ for our Captain who never lost a battle."[1]

175 567 The moment of freedom, more than any event, bound African-Americans to Christianity. Their deliverance from the house of bondage "by no man,"[2] as they believed, did more to instill faith in Christianity than any doctrines taught by whites.

567 771 177 178 Although religious instruction was intended as a conservative element in slave life, and clearly it did not provide the bondspeople with a successful ideology of revolt, slave religion, a synthesis of African and Christian traditions, was used in a progressive manner by slaves. Their application of collective moral principles under the guise of Christianity illustrates how religion can be used effectively to keep a community spiritually alive and culturally creative during a period of historical crisis. Although religion was at the heart of the Gullahs' process of socialization

in the slave quarters, this did not imply total acceptance of a Judeo- 567
Christian concept of reality. The Gullahs broadened the meaning of 771
Christianity, organizing and integrating it into past beliefs and practices. 177
Two traditions formed the basis of the Gullahs' struggle against slavery.
The example of Christ allowed them to take a superior attitude toward 178
their oppressors. But they also exerted spiritual and psychological autonomy by clinging to Africanity. In their isolation, the Gullahs remained an uprooted people whose acceptance of Christianity was sometimes outward, selective, and subject to reinterpretations which would not force them to relinquish old ways entirely. Of course, African beliefs, where these remained, accommodated the slave situation just as Christianity, to some extent, accommodated African religion and philosophy. Where Protestantism did not tolerate Africanity as a separate expression, Africanisms sometimes continued through secretiveness or by finding a place at the center of Protestantism as practiced by the slaves.

As Lawrence Levine notes, freedom placed the slaves in a culturally 567
marginal situation, and weakened their "cultural self-containment." No 177
longer were values and cultural standards determined from within the 178
group. African-Americans found themselves in a bicultural situation, absorbing elements of the dominant society in order to obtain recognition and privileges. Perhaps at the moment of freedom the period of accom-
modation began as a significant factor in black life. Nowhere is this more 567
pronounced than in the organization of the black church. This point may 795
be most easily illustrated by the motif of the gospel songs and their oth- 177
erworldly context, whereas the slave spirituals were full of camouflaged
prayers for freedom. As Levine points out, the period after bondage re- 178
flects a changing consciousness.[3] Slave religion bred radicalism in the 771
early years, and progressivism later. The institutionalized black church, formed after freedom, was far more powerful and independent, but often counseled conservatism.

Sam Polite lived long past bondage. He was over one hundred years 793
old when he prayed the prayer of "The Long Look." He had grown up 771
in slavery, lived through emancipation, reconstruction, restoration, and 782
into the twentieth century of segregation. Still he prayed the prayer of hope. Still he asked for a sign—a look at the future for his people. Polite's prayer implied what history has revealed—that the "New Jerusa-
lem" evaded the African-Americans after freedom. The emancipation ex- 771
perience, born of hope and optimism, brought a new kind of bondage. 567
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771\ 567 177 Gullahs and other African-Americans were to readjust to the new religion that served them so well in bondage. Slave religion was an adaptive and vital spiritualism, a guide for living and for struggle. Acceptance of Christianity had little to do with accommodating slavery. Acceptance of segregation after freedom, without a struggle, owed much to the creeping conservatism within the black church.

121\ 177 One hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation took effect, a black religious leader spoke out that "the Negro is not free." Outside forces that prevented black equality are well known. Historical forces within black society, on the leadership level, have been analyzed but little. Gullahs and other African-Americans did not come out of bondage unscathed. But they did emerge, for the most part, psychologically and communally intact. Though toughened by generations of bitter servitude, they maintained an optimistic spirit. Gullahs were not accommodationists in 1863 and 1865, but a community hoping and eager to take their place as citizens. They were aware of their strength as a people. What happened to erode the African-American sense of worldly confidence was not so much born of slavery as it was the product of unfulfilled promises from the national sector and perhaps disappointed leadership from the black institutional religious community in the years of the first freedoms and afterward. As W. E. B. DuBois stated, the greatness of black religion can only be found in its link with the "spiritual strivings of the black masses," as it takes a stand on social and political issues affecting African-Americans.

APPENDIX A

Ethnic Origins of Carolina Slaves

This appendix explains my own tabulations for ethnic origins of Carolina 127
slaves. A valuable source of information for studying African origins was 567
published in four volumes by Elizabeth Donnan. Her works are based 175
on primary sources consisting of ships' records, newspaper advertisements, records of the Royal African Company, the correspondence of Henry Laurens and other merchants, and various documents illustrating the pattern and magnitude of the international slave trade. Donnan's volume on the Southern colonies was particularly useful for examining the slave trade to Carolina because the records of that colony were so well preserved and because white Carolinians made a fetish of regional provenance where human cargo was concerned. From these data we obtain an impression of the coastal origins of many cargoes entering Charleston harbor, and it appears that Africans of the Windward Coast and Senegambia regions provided South Carolina with the majority of its forced laborers for nearly forty years.

Table A.1 represents my calculation of the ethnic origins of slaves 175
entering South Carolina during the middle period of the international 567
slave trade. It was compiled from a tabulation of lists of cargoes pub- 128
lished by Elizabeth Donnan. Table A.2 is a rough numerical calculation of slaves identifiable by African origins entering Charleston during the middle period of the trade. Since many cargoes did not indicate size, our estimate for this unknown was based upon the average number of slaves on vessels which did indicate the size of their cargo. Deliberately ex-

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988

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TABLE A.1

Number and Percentage of Cargoes of Identifiable Origin Imported from 1749 to 1787 (Middle Period)

Coastal Region of Origin	*No. of Cargoes*	*Percentage*
Senegambia	102	32.4
Windward Coast	90	28.6
Gold Coast	54	17.2
Bight of Benin		
Bight of Biafra	25	7.9
Angola (including Gaboon and the Kongo)	35	11.1
Others: Whydah, Bance Island, Isle de Los	9	2.8
Total	315	100.0

Source: Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1935) vol. 4, passim; and *South Carolina Gazette*.

TABLE A.2

Numerical Estimate of Slaves Identifiable by Origin Imported from 1749 to 1787 (Middle Period)

	Cargoes with Numerical Count		*Cargoes without Numerical Count*			
Coastal Region of Origin	*No. of Cargoes*	*No. of Slaves*	*No. of Cargoes*	*Est. Slaves*	*Total Cargoes*	*Total Slaves (Est.)*
Senegambia	66	10,499	36	5,724	102	16,223
Windward Coast	65	11,135	25	4,275	90	15,410
Gold Coast	37	6,240	17	2,856	54	9,096
Angola	33	7,480	2	454	35	7,934
Bight of Benin						
Bight of Biafra	18	3,343	7	1,302	25	4,665
Others	7	956	2	274	9	1,230
Total	226	39,653	89	14,885	315	54,538

Source: Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents*, vol. 4, passim.

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cluded from tables A.1 and A.2 are those vessels which indicated only the West Indies as the source of origin. Such listings meant the slaves were purchased in the West Indies from an arriving African cargo, or that the ship had stopped in the West Indies and disposed of most of its African cargo. Cargoes listed as simply from the West Indies were usually quite small and often contained Creole New World-born slaves.

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As discussed in the text, research indicates that the majority of slaves in Carolina by 1740 were chiefly from Kongo-Angola. This was also the largest group imported into South Carolina during the entire slave trade as illustrated in table A.3, which was taken from Philip D. Curtin's *Atlantic Slave Trade*. However, Curtin's percentages may be misleading for purposes of examining African cultural influence in coastal Carolina because he lumps the entire slave trade period together. Up to 1740, the end of the first period of the Carolina trade, Kongo-Angolans were the majority. But as evident from tables A.1 and A.2, during the period of high economic growth and large-scale slave importation in the Sea Island region, these Africans composed a relatively small percentage of total cargoes with known coastal origins. Africans from the Kongo-Angola region do not again figure heavily in South Carolina trade until the nineteenth century. Curtin has no separate breakdown for these years (1804–1807), when many Kongo-Angola peoples were imported (see tables A.4 and A.5) chiefly, but not exclusively, for the benefit of up-country plantations and new territories. At the time, South Carolina was the only state importing slaves and supplied other states as well. In the nineteenth century, despite the emergence of Sea Island cotton as an export of growing significance, many coastal and Sea Island planters were well supplied with slaves and expressed strong hostility to reopening of the international trade in 1803. Concerned about the depreciation of their own slave property, as well as the prospect of slave revolts, these planters were instrumental in the near-defeat of the bill to reopen the African slave

TABLE A.3

Percentage of Slaves of Identifiable Origin Imported from 1733 to 1807

Coastal Region of Origin	*Percentage*
Senegambia	19.5
Windward Coast (including Sierra Leone)	23.1
Gold Coast	13.3
Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra	3.7
Angola	39.6
Mozambique, Madagascar	0.7
Total	100.0

Source: Philip D. Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison-University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 157, Table 45.

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TABLE A.4

Percentage of Cargoes of Identifiable Origin Imported from 1804 to 1807 (Final Period)

Coastal Region of Origin	*No. of Cargoes*	*Percentage*
Senegambia	11	7.5
Windward Coast	44.5	30.5
Gold Coast	23.5	16.0
Bright of Benin, Bight of Biafra	3	2.0
Angola	55	37.7
Others	9	6.3
Total	90.0	100.0

Source: Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents*, vol. 4, passim.

TABLE A.5

Numerical Estimate of Slaves Identifiable by Origin Imported from 1804 to 1807 (Final Period)

	Cargoes with Numerical Count		*Cargoes without Numerical Count*			
Coastal Region of Origin	*No. of Cargoes*	*No. of Slaves*	*No. of Cargoes*	*No. of Slaves*	*Total Cargoes*	*Total Slaves (Est.)*
Senegambia	4	290	6	73	10	435
Windward Coast	33	4,374	16	2,096	49	6,470
Gold Coast	16	2,416	7	1,057	23	3,624
Angola	50	14,440	5	1,694	55	16,134
Bight of Benin Bight of Biafra	6	1,809	1	301	7	2,412
Others	2	473	—	—	2	473
Total	111	23,802	40	5,221	151	29,023

Source: Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents*, vol v. 4, passim.

[114] trade in South Carolina. Thus, Philip Curtin's percentages, which cover the years 1733–1807, are too broad chronologically to adequately represent the pattern of the slave trade in regard to cultural geography.

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In *The Myth of the Negro Past*, Melville J. Herskovits provided what appeared to be a good source of ethnic information. Using raw material supplied by Elizabeth Donnan, Herskovits developed a numerical tabulation of slave imports into South Carolina for the years 1733–1785 in

TABLE A.6

Number of Slaves Identifiable by Origin Imported from 1733 to 1785 (Middle Period)

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Coastal Region of Origin	*No. Imported*
Origin given as "Africa"	4,146
From the Gambia to Sierra Leone	12,441
Sierra Leone	3,906
Rice and Grain Coasts	3,851
"Guinea Coast" (Gold Coast to Calabar)	18,240*
Angola	11,485
Congo	10,924
Mozambique	243
East Africa	230
Total Imported from Africa	65,466
Total Imported from the West Indies	2,303
Total Number of Imports	67,796

*Herskovits notes that of this number only 1,168 slaves were brought in ships sailing from "Benin," "Bonny," "New Calabar," and "Old Calabar." Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, p. 305 n.

Source: Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston-Beacon Press, 1958; repr. from 1941 ed.) p. 48.

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order to determine ethnic origin and influence among Africans imported into that state (see table A.6). However, Herskovits' computation somewhat confuses the issue of provenance in regard to the Sea Island region because it is based only on the available number of slaves from various regions rather than on the number of cargoes as well, and the percentage of cargoes from a particular area. In many cases, neither Donnan nor the Charleston newspapers (which were her main source) reported the number of slaves in a given cargo. Donnan's information on total yearly imports was not based on individual computation but derived from annual figures printed in newspapers that did not distribute imports on the basis of coastal origin. Thus, Herskovits apparently tabulated only cargoes which listed the African *coastal origin* and indicated the *size* of the cargo as well. This makes his numerical tabulation unreliable.

Another problem with Herskovits' tabulation for this study is that his estimates partly cover the period in which the Sea Islands were only sparsely settled (the early period). Hence, we cannot obtain a clear indication of the ethnic origins of Sea Island Gullahs from Herskovits' information. It seems that a more reasonable estimated of sources of or-

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igin can be obtained by using the *number* of cargoes of known African origin, as is done in table A.1, rather than using *cargo size* as a primary indicator. Yet, both table A.1 and table A.2 illustrate that during the middle period of the slave trade a large, new migrant group was added to the African-Carolinian population.

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121 6. Levine, *Black Culture and Consciousness*, 36–37, 43, 49–51, 75–77.

113 7. Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), ix.

8. August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *Black History and the Historical Profession, 1915–1980* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 191.

(114) 9. Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 92. For a discussion of how Raboteau's view "minimizes the contribution of African ritual traditions" see Robert Simpson, "The Shout and Shouting in Slave Religion in the United States," *The Southern Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (Spring, 1985): 40–46.

10. Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 152.

11. Ibid., Chapters 3 and 4.

12. Ibid., x.

13. Edward H. Carr, *What Is History?* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 23–35.

14. Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, Chapters 5 and 6.

114 113 15. Vincent Harding, *There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983). Years ago, Harding explored relationships between religion and resistance among slaves. See his "Religion and Resistance among Antebellum Negroes, 1800–1860," in August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, eds., *The Making of Black America* I (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 179–97.

16. Harding, *There Is a River*, Introduction.

17. Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), passim.

18. Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), passim, but especially xvi–xvii, 3–149, 280–84, 597–98, 658–60.

19. Meier and Rudwick, *Black History*, Chapter 3 and 258–65.

20. See for example Paul D. Escott, *Slavery Remembered: A Record of Twentieth Century Slave Narratives* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979) 18–35; E. P. Thompson, "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?" *Social History* 3, no. 2 (1978): 134–37; Eric Perkins, "Roll, Jordan, Roll: A 'Marx' for the Master Class," *Radical History Review* 3, no. 4 (1976): 41–59; Gutman, *Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*, 309–20; For the most recent interpretation in support of paternalism, see Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labor: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987) 103–57, 195–241.

114 • 567 21. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 283. According to Elkins, the typical American slave was labeled "Sambo" in Southern lore. "Sambo" was "loyal but lazy, humble but chronically given to lying and stealing: his behavior full of infantile silliness and his talk inflated with childish exaggeration." The "Sambo" of the Old South was compared by Elkins to what he termed a similar personality type, the prisoners of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The author states that they were one and the same historically, both products of a "closed" and "authoritarian" system. This personality type developed in the United States and in Nazi Germany but not in Latin America, according to Elkins, because Latin American institutions protected slaves while American institutions did not protect slaves nor German institutions protect Jews. Stanley Elkins, *Slavery, a Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 82, 63–79, 73, 136–37, 175–217.

114 22. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 209–232.

113 23. Ibid., 281.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 212.

26. Ibid., 283–84.

121 567 27. Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness, Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1973), 46–59.

113 28. Ibid.; Arthur P. Mendel, ed., *Essential Works of Marxism* (New York: Bantam Books, 1961), 15–16.

29. John Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972 ed.), 200–201.

30. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 329–88, 441.

31. Ibid., xvii.

113 32. John M. Janzen and Wyatt MacGaffey, *An Anthology of Kongo Religion: Primary Texts from Lower Zaire* (Lawrence, Kans.: University of Kansas Publications in Anthropology, No. 5, 1974), 2–3.

Prologue

1. Mason Crum, *Gullah, Negro Life in the Carolina Sea Islands* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1940), 3, 19–22, 78; Guion G. Johnson, *A Social History of the Sea Islands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930), 112, 130; Paul Quattlebaum, *The Land Called Chicora* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1958), 86–88.

175 567 2. The spelling of Kongo with a K instead of C is used by some Africanists. It refers to the traditional, unitary civilization and way of life of BaKongo peoples. The C spelling represents the political shift that occurred with white colonial penetration and partition in Central Africa. Traditional Kongo civilization includes modern Bas-Zaire, neighboring Cabinda, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, and Northern Angola. The ancient civilization was once under the united suzerainty of the kingdom of Kongo. The language is KiKongo, although dialects vary widely in this Bantu-speaking world of Africa. The numerous ethnic groups and some neighboring ones share cultural and religious traditions. They also share memories of the trials and tears left in the wake of centuries of transatlantic trade in slaves. 113 John M. Janzen and Wyatt MacGaffey, *An Anthology of Kongo Religion: Primary Texts from Lower Zaire* (Lawrence, Kans.: University of Kansas Publications in Anthropology, No. 5, 1974), 1–3; Robert Farris Thompson and Joseph Cornet, *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in Two Worlds* (Washington, D. C.: National Gallery of Art, 1981), 27; Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 103; Wyatt MacGaffey, *Custom and Government in the Lower Congo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 11; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 30–36, 44–45, 134–35, 411.

101 113 3. *SCG*, March 27, 1742; Reed Smith, "Gullah," *A Reprint of Bulletin #190 of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia: State Printing Co., 1926), 3–4; Winifred Vass, *The Bantu Speaking Heritage of the United States* (Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, 1979), 31.

199 113 4. Smith, "Gullah," 3–4; *SCA*, December 22 and 29, 1843; Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days Amongst the Contrabands* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1968; repr. from 1893 ed.), 54, 57. Peter Wood also suggests that perhaps Gullah derived from a "multiple etymology." See *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1974), 172, n. 12.

174 5. Lorenzo D. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1969; repr. from 1949 ed.).

114 113 6. See reviews and discussions by Raven I. McDavid, Jr., *Language: Journal of the Linguistic Society of America* 26 (April–June, 1950): 323–32, and Morris Swadish, *Word: Journal*

174 114 113 *of the Linguistic Circle of New York* 7 (April, 1951): 82–83; P. E. Hair, "Sierra Leone Items in the Gullah Dialect of American English," *Sierra Leone Language Review* no. 4 (1965): 79–84; Frederick G. Cassidy, "The Place of Gullah," *American Speech* 55 no. 1 (Spring, 1980): 3–14.

[101] 7. Turner, *Africanisms in Gullah*, 194. Gullahs often referred to themselves as "countrymen," as a way of identifying themselves as African-born. When asked what their language was, they would reply, "the way we talk." Mary A. Twining and Keith E. Baird, "Introduction to Sea Island Folklife," *Journal of Black Studies* 10, no. 4 (June, 1980): 398; Donald R. Kloe, "Buddy Quow: An Anonymous Poem in Gullah-Jamaican Dialect Written Circa 1800," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (June, 1974): 82–84.

8. Hair, "Sierra Leone Items in Gullah," 79–81.

9. Ibid., 83.

● [567] 10. Turner, *Africanisms in Gullah*, passim; Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*; Wood, *Black Majority*. Wood does suggest, however, that the Windward Coast slaves had a special appeal and significance because South Carolinians recognized their familiarity with rice, the colony's main export. The Windward Coast was also called the Grain Coast and in specific areas the Rice Coast. As Wood observes, "Throughout the era of slave importation in South Carolina references can be found concerning African familiarity with rice." Wood, *Black Majority*, 59–60. Daniel Littlefield further explored Wood's idea and provides an exception to the general emphasis on Kongo-Angolan influences. See his *Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981). Another important author, the late Walter Rodney, also early recorded the significance of Upper Guinea in the transatlantic trade, although Rodney was not specifically writing about South Carolina. See his *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

578 113 11. Turner, *Africanisms in Gullah*, 91, 194; Twining and Baird, "Introduction to Sea Island Folklife," 397–98.

12. Turner, *Africanisms in Gullah*, 63, 151, 189; see Chapters 2 and 9.

174 13. Ibid., 136, 138; Wood, *Black Majority*, 131, 302, 334–39; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, Chapter 2, 107, 108; Hair, "Sierra Leone Items in Gullah," 83; Kloe, "Buddy Quow," 87; Cassidy. "Place of Gullah," 7–14. Linguist Ian Hancock believes that KiKongo speech "cannot be counted as a contributing factor to Gullah," despite the large numerical representation, because BaKongo peoples did not go through a creolization process. He argues, even more forcefully than Hair, for Upper Guinea Coast influences since some of these Africans already spoke a creole because of contact with whites on the Guinea Coast. While assessment of Upper Guinea linguistic impact appears sound, Turner, Cassidy and others continue to support significant Kongo and Gold Coast influences. Ian F. Hancock, "Gullah and Barbadian—Origins and Relationships," *American Speech* 55 no. 1 (Spring, 1980): 27–32.

(113) 14. Roger Bastide, *African Civilizations in the New World*, trans. Peter Green (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 106, 154, 161; Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958 repr. from 1941 ed.); Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, Chapter 2; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 151–57, 178–203.

175 567 113 15. Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964).

16. Arthur Sumner to Lt. Joseph Clark, January 23, 1863, Penn School Papers, vol. 4, SHC.

17. Diary of William F. Allen, 25, 44, 83–84, in William F. Allen Family Papers, 1775–

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1937, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; David Thorpe to John Mooney, January 25, 1863, Thorpe Series, James McBride Dabbs Papers, SHC. 113

18. Charles Sumner to Nina Hartshorn, July 7, 1862, Penn School Papers, vol. 4 SHC. (567) See also Frances Anne Kemble, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1863), 218–19; Sir Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), I: 244–45; *SCA*, July 14, 1863 and December 29, 1843; Allen Diary, 18, 127–28, 151–54.

19. For an extensive bibliography on works about Gullahs and the need for more modern approaches, see Mary A. Twining, "Sources in the Folklore and Folklife of the Sea Islands," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 39 (1975): 135–50; In 1980 the *Journal of Black Studies* devoted an entire issue to Sea Island culture. Twining and Baird, eds., *Journal of Black Studies*; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, passim; Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), passim. 113

20. Harriott Pinckney Rutledge to Edward Rutledge, August 5, 1822, Pinckney Papers, SCHS; James Hamilton, *Negro Plot* (Charleston: Joseph W. Ingraham, 1822), 291; Benjamin Elliott, "To Our Northern Brethren," quoted in Edwin C. Holland, *A Refutation of the Calumnies Circulated against the Southern and Western States, Respecting the Institution and Existence of Slavery among Them* (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1822), 79; Lionel Kennedy and Thomas Parker, *The Trial Record of Denmark Vesey*, Intro. by John Oliver Killens (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970; repr. from 1822 ed. and published under title: *An Official Report of the Trials of Sundry Negroes*), 13–14, 76–79; F. A. Mood, *Methodism in Charleston* (Nashville: E. Stevenson and J. E. Evans, 1856), 130–31; William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War* (New York: Harper & Row. 1965), 72–76; Susan Markey Fickling, "Slave Conversion in South Carolina, 1830–1860" (M. A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 1924), 16–17; Thomas Bennett to Richard Furman, 1822, Furman Papers, SCL; Henry Irving Tragle, *The Southhampton Slave Revolt of 1831: A Compilation of Source Materials* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1971); Rev. Leroy F. Beaty, *Work of South Carolina Methodism Among the Slaves: An Address Delivered Before the Historical Society of the South Carolina Conference*, November 26, 1901, HSSCC, 9–10; C. C. Pinckney to William Capers, January 24, 1835, HSSCC; Luther Porter Jackson, "Religious Instruction of Negroes, 1830–1860," *Journal of Negro History* 15 (1930): 79–79.

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21. Charles C. Pinckney, *An Address Delivered in Charleston Before the Agricultural Society of South Carolina, At Its Annual Meeting, 18th August, 1829* (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1829), passim; James O. Andrew, "The Southern Slave Population," *MMQR* 13 (1831): 315–17; Charles C. Jones, *The Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the United States* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969; repr. from 1842 ed.), 16–18; 80; *Proceedings of the Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, May 13–15, 1845 on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes* (Charleston: B. Jenkins, 1845), passim; Beaty, *Work of South Carolina Methodism*, 13–34, HSSCC; Report of the Board of Managers of the South Carolina Missionary Society, in *SCA*, January 3, 1851.

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1. Gullah Roots

1. James Pope-Hennessy, *Sins of Our Fathers: A Study of the Atlantic Slave Traders, 1441–1807* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 38; Daniel Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 34–36; Basil Davidson, *The African Slave Trade: Precolonial History, 1450–1850*,

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originally published as *Black Mother* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1961), 105; Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958; repr. from 1941 ed.), 34–40; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), passim; Daniel P. Mannix and Malcolm Cowley, *Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1518–1865* (New York: Viking Press, 1969), 14–20; The term Upper Guinea Coast has altered over centuries. Here our definition is taken from Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 2, 7; Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 vols. (Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Institution, 1935), vol. 4, *The Southern Colonies*, passim; Roger Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, 1760–1810* (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities Press, 1975), 58–60.

2. Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 131; Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 156; Elizabeth Donnan, "The Slave Trade into South Carolina before the Revolution," *American Historical Review* 33 (1927–28): 816–17; William Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts of Guinea and the Slave Trade* (London: James, John and Paul Knapton, 1734; London: Frank Cass, 1971), 173–74; William Smith, *A Voyage to Guinea* (London: John Nourse, 1744; London: Frank Cass, 1967), 135; William Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, trans. John Ralph Willis (Holland, 1704; 4th English ed., New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967), 56–68; Mannix and Cowley, *Black Cargoes*, 17–18; Herskovits, *Negro Past*, 35; Pope-Hennessy, *Sins of Our Fathers*, 58–59.

3. Donnan, *Documents*, vol. 2, *The Eighteenth Century*, 282.

4. Ibid., II:xxxi–xxxiii, 355; IV:301, 382.

5. Wood, *Black Majority*, 301–4, Appendix C, 333–41.

6. Douglas L. Wheeler and Rene Pelissier, *Angola* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1971), 28–51; Davidson, *African Trade*, 144–52; Donnan, *Documents*, II:xvii–xviii; Herskovits, *Negro Past*, 37. Roger Bastide has written that the official documents concerning the Portuguese trade were burned after slavery was suppressed "in an effort to expunge a blot on the country's escutcheon." See Roger Bastide, *African Religions of Brazil: Toward a Sociology of the Interpretations of Civilizations*, trans. Helen Sebba (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978), 33.

7. Jan Vansina, "Long Distance Trade Routes in Central Africa," *Journal of African History* 3 (1962): 375–90; Walter Rodney, "Slavery and Other Forms of Social Oppression on the Upper Guinea Coast in the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade," *Journal of African History* 8, no. 3 (1966): 431, 440; Quoted from Herskovits, *Negro Past*, 37–38.

8. Vansina, "Trade Routes," 375–83; Lorenzo D. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1969; repr. from 1949 ed.), passim; Winifred Vass, *The Bantu Speaking Heritage of the United States* (Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, 1979), 9–19. Wheeler and Pelissier, *Angola*, 6–10; Herskovits, *Negro Past*, 38; Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 157, Table 45.

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9. Wheeler and Pelissier, *Angola*, 6–10; Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, trans. Colin King (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959), passim; H. P. Junod, *Bantu Heritage* (Johannesburg: Hortors, 1938; Westport, Conn.: Negro University Press, 1970), 59–67, 82–102, 125–33; Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 103; *Gentleman's Magazine* 35 (October 1764): 487; Leila Sellers, *Charleston Business on the Eve of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934), 143; Augustine Smyth et al., *The Carolina Low Country* (New York: Macmillan, 1931) 173; Vass, *Bantu Heritage*, 3–5; Wood, *Black Majority*, 96–130, 195–217, 272–326; Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves*, 11–15.

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10. Wood, *Black Majority*, 52–153, 324–35. From 1741 to 1743 a prohibitive duty was imposed. In 1744 four African cargoes arrived. No slave cargoes entered Charleston in 1745 and from 1746 and 1748 another prohibitive duty was in effect. Three African cargoes arrived in 1749 and 1750, respectively. By 1752 the trade was once again in full swing. Donnan, "Slave Trade before the Revolution," 807–8; W. E. B. DuBois, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969; repr. from 1896 ed.), 9–10; W. Robert Higgins, "The Geographical Origins of Negro Slaves in Colonial South Carolina," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 70 (1971): 42–43. 175 113 567 [669]

11. Wood, *Black Majority*, 148, 323; Frank J. Klingberg, *An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina: A Study in Americanization* (Washington, D. C.: Associated Publishers, 1941), 69–70; 72; Converse D. Clowse, *Economic Beginnings in Colonial South Carolina, 1730–1760* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 206, 230–32. Rice was never raised to any large exteit on the Sea Islands since salt water in poisonous to the rice plant. Some Sea Islands did have a few fresh water ponds where rice was grown, but the amount was small and only for local consumption. Guion G. Johnson, *A Social History of the Sea Islands* (Chapel Hill: University of the North Carolina Press, 1930), 18; Frederick V. Emerson, "Geographical Influences in American Slavery," *Geographical Society Bulletin* 63 (1911): 108–9. [669

12. William A. Schaper, *Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1968), 51; Emerson, "Geographical Influences," 108–11; Edward McCrady, *South Carolina under the Royal Government, 1719–1776* (New York: Macmillan, 1899), 386–88; Higgins, "Geographical Origins of Negro Slaves," 35, 37, 46–47; Robert L. Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1728–1765*, (Kingsport, Tenn.: Southern Publishers, 1940), 37–38; Philip D. Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry, 1760–1810," in Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1983), 84; Peter Wood offers interesting evidence which points to Africans' immunity to certain diseases, such as malaria. Yet, as he states, this was not "absolute." Moreover, Todd L. Savitt notes that malaria certainly took its toll in human losses among slaves. He maintains that some blacks did possess an inherited immunity to one or another strain of malaria. But adds that even adult African-born slaves had to ~~go through a "seasoning"~~ period because the "strains of malarial parasites in this country differed from those in their native lands." The "acquired" immunity that blacks reportedly developed was "risky," according to Savitt, since this involved repreated, uninterrupted exposure to malaria over a period of years. Furthermore, we must rely heavily on the words of colonial whites with a vested interest in rationalizing that blacks were more suited to labor in the Carolina swamps and marshes. Africans may have had a varied immunity to certain diseases, but it appears unlikely that this determined white attitudes toward black labor. For Wood, See *Black Majority* 85–88, 90–91. See also Todd L. Savitt, *Medicine and Slavery: The Diseases and Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illiois Press, 1978), 21–26.

13. Schaper, *Sectionalism* 55–56; Emerson, "Georgraphical Influences," 112; Higgins, "Geographical Origins of Negro Slaves," 40–46; Johnson, *Social History*, 18–19; McCrady, *South Carolina under Royal Government*, 267–69; Donnan, *Documents*, IV: passim; See Appendix A.

14. Ellen Gibson Wilson, *The Loyal Blacks* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1976), 48; Philip M. Hamer, et al. eds., *Papers of Henry Laurens*, 10 vols. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968), IV: 294–95. 175 113

15. *SCG*, July 14, 1759.

16. Hamer, *Laurens Papers*, I:252, 331.

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175 113 [197] [177] 17. Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves*, 74–114, Additionally Ian Hancock partly bases his contention of the prevalence of Upper Guinea influence in Gullah dialect on the introduction of creole-speaking slaves brought to South Carolina from this region of Africa. The number of Africans speaking Guinea Coast creole English was small compared to those who spoke no English. Yet the former could have begun the process of spreading creolized English to the latter. Ian F. Hancock, "Gullah and Barbadian—Origins and Relationships." *American Speech* 55 no. 1 (Spring, 1980): 27–30.

18. Richard Jobson, *The Golden Trade or A Discovery of the River Gambia* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1623), 42, 123–25; Francis Moore, *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* (London: J. Stagg, 1739), 17–29, 30–32, 38–39, 47–52, 72–73, 80–82, 105–22; Michel Adanson, *A Voyage to Senegal, the Isle of Goree and the River Gambia* (London: J. Nourse and W. Johnston, 1759), 166; Joseph Corry, *Observations Upon the Windward Coast of Africa* (London: Frank Cass 1958; repr. from 1807 ed.), 64–66; David McPherson, *Annals of Commerce*, 4 vols. (London: Johnson Reprint Co., 1972; repr. from 1805 ed.), IV: 141–42; ~~Harry Gailey,~~ Jr., *A History of the Gambia* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 6, 11, 13; Sellers, *Charleston Business*, 143; David P. Gamble, *The Wolof of Senegambia* (London: International African Institute, 1957), 31–37; Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 1–4; Mannix and Cowley, *Black Cargoes, 15–16; SCG*, July 2, 1760, October 11, 1760, August 29, 1761; *South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal*, March 13, 1769, May 8, 1769, June 22, 1769, July 2, 1771, August 13, 1771, December 1, 1772. June 1, 1773, July 18, 1774, January 13, 1785, December 1, 1772.

19. Appendix A; *SCG*, August 19, 1756, June 23, 1756.

● [567] 20. Donnan, *Documents*, IV: 404 n.; Higgins, "Geographical Origins of Negro Slaves," 41; Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry," 84–85; DuBois, *African Trade*, 90; Schaper, *Sectionalism*, 81–88, 149–62; Sellers, *Charleston Business*, 29–30, 128; Appendix A; Wood, *Black Majority*, 333–41. Higgins states that many slaves, prior to 1775, entered Charleston but were not employed in Carolina. The Sea Island port of Beaufort did some importing as well, although Higgins gives no port-by-port importation breakdown. He believes the "majority of all Negroes in the United States today are descended from blacks brought to North America during the colonial period." This has even stronger implications for the spread of cultural influences by ethnic groups of the middle period of the trade. Higgins, 'Geographical Origins of Negro Slaves," 39, 46–47.

17 113 21. Rodney, *History of Upper Guinea*, 3–15, 233.

22. Moore, *Travels*, 29–35, 40–51; Jobson, *Golden Trade*, 27–37; Adanson, *Voyage to Senegal*, 57–59; Smith, *Voyage to Guinea*, 32; Rodney, *History of Upper Guinea*, 117; Charlotte Quinn, *Mandingo Kingdoms of the Senegambia* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), 1–54; Gailey, *History of Gambia*, 10–17; Henry Fenwick Reeve, *The Gambia: Its History, Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (London: Smith, Elder, 1972), 12, 73, 78–79, 171–79, 180–81, 198–203; Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 156–67.

175 113 23. Rodney, *History of Upper Guinea*, 112–15, 116–17; Moore, *Travels*, 41–44; Reeve, *Gambia, Ancient Medieval, Modern*, 171–78.

24. Moore, *Travels*, 42–43.

25. Douglas Grant, *The Fortunate Slave* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), Chapter 4, 156–67; Moore, *Travels*, 205–8; Rodney, *History of Upper Guinea*, 116–17. Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*. For another example of a black nobleman being sold into slavery see Terry Alford, *Prince Among Slaves* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986; repr. from 1977 ed.).

26. Rodney, *History of Upper Guinea*, 111–17, 236–39.

27. John Matthews, *A Voyage to the River Sierra Leone* (London: Frank Cass, 1966; repr.

26. Folklore Project, #1655 and #1855, D-4-27A, 27B, WPA, SCL; Lowrey, *Old Plantation*, 83–87; Towne Diary, 98; Elsie Clews Parsons, *Folk-lore of the Sea Islands of South Carolina* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Folk-lore Society 1923), 211–13; E. Horace Fitchett, "Superstitions in South Carolina," *The Crisis* 43 (1936): 360–71; Henry F. Davis, "Folklore in South Carolina," *Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 245–49; Leonora Herron and Alice M. Bacon, "Conjuring and Conjure Doctors," *Southern Workman* 24 (1895): 118; Louis Pendleton, "Notes on Negro Folklore and Witchcraft in the South," *Journal of American Folklore* 3 (1890): 301–17; Balandier, *Daily Life in Kongo*, 248–50; Laman, *Kongo*, III: 216–21; Glave, "Fetishism in Congo Land," 834–36; James R. Stuart Recollections, n.d., circa 1850, 2–4, SHC; Charles A. Raymond, "Religious Life of the Negro Slave," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine* 27 (June–November, 1963): Part I, 478–80, Part II, 676, Part III, 821; David Thorpe to John Mooney, January 25, 1863, Thorpe Series, James McBride Dabbs Papers, SHC. 113 567 771

27. Despite the exalted modern application of the term "ontology" in its reference to abstract being, "ontology" originally referred to that which belongs to existent finite being. See Walter Brugger, ed., *Philosophical Dictionary*, trans. Kenneth Baker (Spokane: Gonzaga University Press, 1972), 301–2 ("Ontology"). With regard to African culture and spirituality, the concept of being cannot be restricted to the physiological, as opposed to the psychological or fantastic sphere. 771 113 [771)

28. MacGaffey, *Custom in Lower Kongo*, 261–62; Parsons, *Religion in an African Society*, 173–76, 179, 183–85; Parrinder, *Religion in Africa*, Chapters 2–6; Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, trans. Colin King (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959), passim; Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 187–88; Abraham, *Mind of Africa*, 52; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, 115–17; Mbiti *African Religions*, 2–16. 171 113

29. Michael Welton, "Themes in African Traditional Belief and Ritual," *Practical Anthropology* 18 (1971): 1–8; E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion, A Definition* (London: SMC Press, 1973), 61–68; *CAJ*, January 31, 1834; *SCA*, July 28, 1843, February 16, 1844, October 30, 1846; Charlotte Forten, "Life on the Sea Islands," Part I, *Atlantic Monthly* 13 (June, 1864): 592. [771)

30. Mbiti *African Religions*, 210–13; Abraham, *Mind of Africa*, 106; Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 190–91; Parsons, *Religion in an African Society*, 174, 183–84; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, 103–5; Parrinder, *Religion in Africa*, 41, 81–89; Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, Chapters 5–6; Jahn, *Muntu*, 110, 114–17; Amponsah, *Topics on African Traditional Religion*, 70–80; Opoku, *West African Religion*, 152–60.

31. Mbiti, *African Religions*, 16.

32. Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, 117–21; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 84.

33. Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 64–66; Jahn, *Muntu*, 121–27; Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 187–202; Abraham, *Mind of Africa*, 48–49, 52, 59–62; Parsons, *Religion in an African Society*, 174–93; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, 123–24; Mbiti, *African Religions*, 15–16, Chapters 11–14; Parrinder, *Religion in Africa*, 78–83; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 27–99; Opoku, *West African Religion*, 91–139; Amponsah, *Topics on Traditional Religion*, 48–68.

3. Missionaries and Masters

1. Samuel Thomas to SPG, December 25, 1702, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 1, series A, vol. 1; Faith Vibert, "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts: Its work for the Negroes in North America before 1783," *Journal of Negro History* 25 (April, 1933): 171, 182–84, 188–89; John C. Van Horne, ed., *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The* 175 793 113

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175 797 113 *Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717–1777* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 25; Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 196–97. There was a tendency among some early missionaries to indiscriminately refer to Indians and Africans as "blacks." Se Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery*, 39, n. 20.

2. Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 throug Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 37–38; Samuel Thomas to Dr. Bray, January 20, 1702, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 1, series A, vol. 1; Francis Varnod to SPG, January 13, 1723, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 6, series B, vol. 4 (1); Thomas Nairne to Dr. Marston, August 20, 1705, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 12, series A, vol. 2.

175 797 567 3. South Carolina Clergy to Gideon Johnston, March 4, 1712, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 6, series A, vol. 8; William Taylor to SPG, May 15, 1716, SPGLL, BV 7, reel 6, series B, vol. 4 (1); Gilbert Jones to SPG, November 16, 1716, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 13, se vol. 4 (1).

113 4. Francis Le Jau to SPG, March 22, 1708–9, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 3, series A, South Carolina Clergy to Gideon Johnston, March 4, 1712, SPGLL.

5. Robert Maule to SPG, Summer, 1710, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 5, series A, vol. 5.

175 797 6. Richard Ludlam to SPG, 1725, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 11, series A, vol. 19; Francis Varnod to SPG, April 3, 1728, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 12, series A, vol. 21; Robert Stevens to SPG, February 21, 1705, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 2, series A, vol. 2.

113 7. Frank Klingberg, ed., *Carolina Chronicle, the Papers of Commissary Gideon Johnston, 1707–1716* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946), 118–19; South Carolina Clergy to Gideon Johnston, March 4, 1712, SPGLL.

175 113 8. Thomas Naire to Dr. Marston. August 20, 1705, SPGLL; Lewis Jones to SPG, January 26, 1727–28 SPGLL, BV 6, reel 11, series A, vol. 20; Frank J. Klingbe *Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina: A Study in Americanization* (W D. C.: Associated Publishers, 1941), 66–68; Wood, *Black Majority*, 127–30; M. Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina, A Political History 1663–1763* (Chapel Hill: Universit North Carolina Press, 1966), 111–16; Verner W. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 1670–1732 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964), 168–69, 184–85.

175 9. Lewis Jones to SPG, January 26, 1727–28; Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina*, 81, 99.

10. Lewis Jones to SPG, January 26, 1727–28; Wood. *Black Majority*, 150.

567 797 113 11. Verner W. Crane, "Dr. Thomas Bray and the Charitable Colony Project, 1730," *William and Mary Quarterly* 19, 3d. ser. (January, 1962): 58–61; Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina*, 168–69; Henry A. M. Smith, "Purrysburgh," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 10 (October, 1909): 189–91; Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery*, 1–18.

12. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery*, 18–19.

13. Smith, "Purrysburgh," 187–95; Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery*, 17–18; Arnold Dallimore, *George Whitefield, Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth Century Revival*, 2 vols. (Guildford and London: Billing and Sons, 1970), I: 506; Walter Brooks, "The Priority of the Silver Bluff Church and its Promoters," *Journal of Negro History* 7 (April, 1922): 172–96; "Letters Showing and Rise and Progress of the Early Negro Churches of Georgia and the West Indies," *Journal of Negro History* 1 (January, 1916): 69–92; Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 139–42; *CAJ*, January 31, 1834, June 20, 1834.

14. Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 66–68, 69–70, 72; Wood, *Black Majority*, 314–26.

15. Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 70–74; Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colo-*

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nial Slavery, 72; Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina*, 231–32; Edward McCrady, *South Carolina under the Royal Government, 1719–1776* (New York: Macmillan, 1899), 238, 240–42; David T. Morgan, "The Great Awakening in South Carolina, 1740–1775," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 70 (Fall, 1971): 595–606.

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16. A. S. Salley, ed., *Minutes of the Vestry of St. Helena's Parish, South Carolina, 1726–1812* (Columbia: State Co., 1919), 22–25; Frederick Dalcho, *An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina* (New York: Arno Press, 1972; repr. from 1820 ed.), 379–81; Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 72–74; Morgan, "Great Awakening in South Carolina," 602–3.

17. John Wikhead to SPG, September 26, 1715, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 6, series B, vol. 4 (1); Francis Varnod to SPG, January 13, 1723, SPGLL; South Carolina Clergy to Gideon Johnston, March 4, 1712, SPGLL.

18. Francis Varnod to SPG, January 13, 1723 SPGLL; John Fulton to SPG, December 4, 1730, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 12, series A, vol. 23; Richard Ludlam to SPG, 1725, SPGLL.

19. Samuel Thomas to SPG, December 25, 1702, SPGLL; Thomas Hassell to SPG, August 20, 1712, BV 6, reel 3, series A, vol. 7; Letters of J. Ottolenghe, July 12, 1758, SPG, London Ms. of Dr. Bray's Associates, Letters from the American Colonies, BX 19, reel 10; Klingberg, *Carolina Chronicle*, 118–19.

20. *SCG*, May 4, 1734; Wood, *Black Majority*, Chapter 10; *SCG*, April 16 and 23, 1737; David Barry Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels: A Study of Master-Slave Relations in Antigua* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) 342.

21. Wood, *Black Majority*, 314–15, 324–25; For a discussion on the relationship between literacy, rebelliousness and Spanish agitation, see Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 69–70; and Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina*, 207–9.

22. Alexander Garden to SPG, May 6, 1740, Box 20 from Lambeth Palace Library, vol. 941, no. 72, Ms. of Archbishop of Canterbury; Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 70–104; Garden attempted to interest the Bray Associates in his plans for a Negro school. He proposed that the two Purrysburgh missionaries alter their arrangement, pointing to the larger, more accessible black population in Charleston and better opportunities for success. The two Moravians presented the proposal to Oglethorpe and the Associates, but to no avail. The Purrysburgh missionaries reluctantly kept their commitment to the Associates. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery*, 19.

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23. Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 66–68; Wood, *Black Majority*, 323–24; Robert Maule to SPG, Summer, 1710, SPGLL; Dalcho, *Episcopal Church of South Carolina*, Chapter 4.

24. Sirmans *Colonial South Carolina*, 14–15, 76–77; Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 198; George Fox, *A Memoir of the Life, Travels, and Gospel Labours of George Fox* (London: Friends' Book and Track Depository, 1867), 263–65, 270, 279–80; Sidney V. James, *A People Among People: Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 148–49; William F. Medlin, *Quaker Families in South Carolina and Georgia* (Columbia, S. C.: Ben Franklin Press, 1982), 7–11, 19. As Quakers strengthened their antislavery stand in the colonial era, they were less and less successful in South Carolina. By the time of the War for Independence, the Quakers had left South Carolina. Howard Beeth, "Outside Agitators in Southern History: The Society of Friends, 1650–1800" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1984), 101, 424–51.

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25. Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina*, 36–37; Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina under the Proprietary Government, 1670–1719* (New York: Macmillan 1897), 334, 325–26; Joe Madison King, *A History of South Carolina Baptists* (Columbia: General Board, South Carolina Baptist Convention, 1964), 10–13.

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26. F. Varnod to SPG, April 3, 1728, SPGLL; H. A. Tupper, ed., *Two Centuries of the*

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175 113 *First Baptist Church of South Carolina, 1683–1883* (Baltimore: R. H. Woodland, 1899), 7, 39, 56–59, 84–86, 94–97; A. H. Newman, *A History of the Baptist Church in the United States* (New York: Christian Literature, 1894), 1–79, 221–26, 242–52; David Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World* (New York: Lewis Colby, 1848), 700–702; Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 172–73; King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 26–35. There is some controversy over Screven's actual arrival with the largest group of Baptists. The Charleston Baptist Church maintains that the date of its establishment and Screven's arrival is 1683. Baptist historian Joe M. King places it at 1696. Here we use the generally accepted date of 1683. King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 13.

27. Samuel Thomas to SPG, January 25, 1712, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 1, series A, vol. 1; Francis Le Jau to SPG, August 30, 1712, SPGLL BV 6, reel 5, series A, vol. 7.

28. Lewis Jones to SPG, January 26, 1727–28, SPGLL; Francis Varnod to SPG, April 3, 1728, SPGLL; John Fulton to SPG, December 4, 1730, SPGLL; Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 74–75; King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 25–35.

175 567 113 29. Francis Le Jau to SPG, February 20, 1711, SPGLL, BV 6, reel 4, series A, vol. 7; William G. McLoughlin and Winthrop D. Jordan, eds., "Baptists Face the Barbarities of Slavery in 1710," *Journal of Southern History* 29 (November, 1963): 497–501.

30. McLoughlin and Jordan, "Baptist Face the Barbarities of Slavery," 496–98; New Jersey prescribed death for slaves convicted of murder, arson, mutilation or rape of a white woman, and castration for attempted rape. The Lords of Trade (in London) denounced such "inhumane penalities on Negroes," and the Privy Council voted to disallow the law. See Edgar McManus, *Black Bondage in the North* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1973), 84–85; *Documents Relating to the Colonial, Revolutionary, and Post-Revolutionary History of the State of New Jersey* 42 vols. (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society), 3:473–74; W. L. Grant and James Munro, eds. *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial Series, 1613–1783*, 6 vols. (London: Wyman Publishers), 2:848.

31. McLoughlin and Jordan, "Baptists Face the Barbarities of Slavery," 496–98.

32. King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 14–17, 26–35.

4. *Christianity, Bondage, and the Great Awakening*

175 113 1. Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 77, 81, 308–9; Edward McCrady, *South Carolina under the Royal Government 1719–1776* (New York: Macmillan, 1899), 180, 185–88; Eugene Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina, A Political History 1663–1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 207–8; David T. Morgan, "The Great Awakening in South Carolina, 1740–1775," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 70 (Fall, 1971): 595–96.

2. William Seward, *Journal of a Voyage from Savannah to Philadelphia and from Philadelphia to England* (London: James Buckland, 1740), 5; Arnold Dallimore, *George Whitefield, Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth Century Revival*, 2 vols. (Guildford and London: Billing and Sons, 1970), I: 418–19, II: 60, 139–43; John Pollack, *George Whitefield and the Great Awakening* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), 3–10, 47–54, 62–68; *George Whitefield's Journals* (Guildford and London: Billing and Sons, 1960; repr. unabridg. from 1905 ed., with unpubl. Journal, first publ. 1938), 82–93, 156–59, 302–11, 571–88; Sir James Stephens, *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, 5th ed. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1837), 382–83, 389–90.

3. Whitefield, *Journals*, 165.

4. Ibid., 302–5; Pollack, *Whilefield and Great Awakening*, 45–50, 63–71.

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51. Aldridge, *Marrant Narrative*, 6–9; Wood, "Jesus Christ Has Got Thee," 1–2.

52. Aldridge, *Marrant Narrative*, 10–11; Wood, "Jesus Christ Has Got Thee," 2.

53. Aldridge, *Marrant Narrative*, 10–11; Wood, "Jesus Christ Has Got Thee," 2.

54. Aldridge, *Marrant Narrative*, 13.

55. Ibid., 14, 36–37.

56. Ibid., 15–28, 31–33, 36–39.

57. Dallimore, *Whitefield, Great Evangelist*, I: 45–56, 364, n. 3; Henry, *Whitefield, Wayfaring Witness*, 27, 61.

58. Henry, *Whitefield, Wayfaring Witness*, 96–98; Stephens, *Ecclesiastical Biography*, 400.

59. Dallimore, *Whitefield, Great Evangelist*, I: 484, 498–501 and II: 436–38; Anon., probably George Whitefield, *A Letter to the Negroes Lately Converted to Christ in America* (London: J. Hart, 1743), 3–6; Stein, "George Whitefield on Slavery," 243–56.

60. Dallimore, *Whitefield, Great Evangelist*, II: 438; Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 5–6; Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia*, 162.

61. Dallimore, *Whitefield, Great Evangelist*, I: 499–509; Klingberg, *Appraisal of the Negro*, 113–22; Joseph Ottolenghe to SPG, December 4, 1751 and July 12, 1758, SPG, London Mss. of Dr. Bray's Associates; Habersham to William Knox, July 17, 1765 and November 26, 1770, *Habersham Letters*, 38, 95–99, 102, Wood, *Black Majority*, 324–25; W. Robert Higgins, "The Geographical Origins of Negro Slaves in Colonial South Carolina," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 70 (1971): 40; Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry," 83–86.

62. Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia*, 160–65; Darold D. Wax, "Georgia and the Negro Before the American Revolution," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (March, 1967): 73–75.

5. An Almost Chosen People

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1. Lionel Kennedy and Thomas Parker, *The Trial Record of Denmark Vesey*, Intro. by John Oliver Killens (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970; repr. from 1822 ed., and published under title: *An Official Report of the Trials of Sundry Negroes*), Bibliographic Note; Edward L. Pierce, "The Freedmen at Port Royal," *Atlantic Monthly* 12 (September, 1863): 295; Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), 11–12.

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2. Robert Starobin, ed., *Denmark Vesey: The Slave Conspiracy of 1822* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 11; John Lofton, *Denmark Vesey's Revolt* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1983), 132–37; updated ed. of *Insurrection in South Carolina: The Turbulent World of Denmark Vesey* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Antioch Press, 1964); Harriott Pinckney Rutledge to Edward Rutledge, August 5, 1822, Pinckney Papers, 1744–1849, SCHS; William Jones to Samuel Jones, Jane Bruce Jones Mss, 1784–1831, SCL; F. A. Mood, *Methodism in Charleston* (Nashville: E. Stevenson and J. E. Evans, 1856), 130–31; Kennedy and Parker, *Trial*, 4–14, 18, 21–22, 57–59, 111; Marina Wikramanayake, *A World in Shadow: The Free Black in Antebellum South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), 133–36.

3. Philip D. Morgan, "Colonial South Carolina Runaways: Their Significance for Slave Culture," *Slavery and Abolition* 6 no. 3 (1985): 57–58; Joseph Cepas Carroll, *Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800–1865* (Boston: Chapman and Grimes, 1938), 17, 19–24; Peter H. Wood. *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 285–307, 314–35; Vincent Harding, *There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 31–36; Kennedy and Parker, *Trial*, 157. Although Morgan offers no explanation for the discrep-

175 567 112 ancy between the number of runaways in Virginia and South Carolina, he notes the presence of more African-born slaves among the captive runaway population in South Carolina. Thus the numbers of Africans in Carolina's slave population clearly accounts for some of the difference between the two colonies.

[669] 4. *SCG*, September 8 to September 15, 1759, October 23, 1751, November 25, 1751, May 28 to June 4, 1754, June 16, 1758.

175 567 113 5. Ibid., September 14 to September 21, 1747, June 25 to July 2, 1750; Eugene D. Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 69; Jill M. Watts, " 'We Do Not Live for Ourselves Only': Seminole Black Perceptions and the Second Seminole War," *UCLA Historical Journal* 7 (1986): 5–7; Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: International Publishers, 1967; repr. from 1943 ed.), 197–98; Philip D. Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry, 1760–1810," in Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1983), 92, 118.

6. *SCG*, March 4, 1756, April 29, 1754; Colonial Records of South Carolina, *Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, 1739–1741*, 230, 505; Watts, " 'We Do Not Live For Ourselves Only'," 6–7.

7. Michael P. Johnson, "Runaway Slaves and the Slave Communities in South Carolina, 1799–1820," *William and Mary Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (July, 1981): 3, 418, 433–36, 441. Although Professor Johnson is dealing with a later period, his research is applicable for the eighteenth century; *SCG*, March 17, 1724, April 21, 1759.

175 113 8. *SCG*, September 17, 1772. This view of slavery in the Lowcountry, in terms of its harshaness, is different from that of Phiiip Morgan. He cites, for example, the transition from a period of negative to one of positive increase, as an important indicator of less harsh conditions and more black autonomy. Yet Morgan's table on natural increase shows an annual rate of only 1.9 percent as the highest, from 1770–75. This rate of increase appears far too negligible to tell us much about better contitions. Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry," 83–89.

9. *SCG*, September 17, 1772. For other manifestations of black assertion in urban Charleston see Peter H. Wood, " 'Taking Care of Business' in Revolutionary South Carolina: Republicanism and the Slave Society," in Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise, eds., *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 268–93.

10. James Oakes, *The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 4–34. For paternalistic arguments, see Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan Roll, the World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), xiv–xvii, 3–149, 280–84; also for a more measured discussion of paternalism, see Charles Joyner, *Down By the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 56, 231–32.

11. Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973; first pub. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1961), Preface; Ira Berlin, "The Revolution in Black Life" in Alfred F. Young, ed. *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), 351–52; J. Madison, Jr. to William Bradford, November 26, 1774 and July 10, 1775, William Bradford Collection, HSP; Wood, " 'Taking Care of Business'," 283–87; and his " 'Impatient of Oppression'; Black Freedom Struggles on the Eve of White Independence," *Southern Exposure* 28 (October, 1985): 606, 612–13.

17 113 12. Walter Brooks, "The Priority of the Silver Bluff Church and its Promoters," *Journal*

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17 30; William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 9–10, 18–19; Guion G. Johnson, *A Social History of the Sea Islands* (Chapel Hill: University of
113 North Carolina Press, 1930), 24–29, 50–54, Wikramanayake, *World in Shadow*, 117–18, 121–22; John Phillips, *An Appeal to Matters of Fact and Common Sense, Recommended to the Serious Consideration of the Inhabitants of Charleston, South Carolina* (New York: T. Kirk, 1798), passim; Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry." Although Morgan does not see much black participation during the War for Independence (a point on which we disagree), he does note the postwar impact on the Lowcountry in terms of an increased sense of autonomy among blacks which was manifested in a number of ways. See especially 108–41.

175 19. Lofton, *Vesey's Revolt*, 47–51; J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1957 repr. from 1782 ed.), 155–161; Johann Schöepf,
•567 *Travels in the Confederation, 1783–84*, trans. Alfred Morrison (Philadelphia: W. J. Campbell, 1911), 220–221; Phillips, *Appeal to Inhabitants of Charleston*, 29; Avonor Samuel to William
113 Tilghman, December 30, 1785, William Tilghman Papers, HSP; Benjamin Rush Medical Notes, July 12, 1803, Rush Corr. v. 2: 64, HSP.

20. Major Pierce Butler to Mrs. Izard, February 25, 1797, Butler to John Hoom, January 6, 1803, Butler to John Cooper, February 15, 1818 and March 7, 1818; Wistar Papers, Butler Section, box 31, fol. 7, HSP; Roswell King to Pierce Butler, September 20, 1835, box 33, fol. 5, Pierce Butler to Mr. Taylor, March 28, 1840, Letterbook, 1838–1840, 53–55, and notation of sale of Butler slaves, February 21, 1859, box 41, fol. 5, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, HSP; Frances Ann Kemble, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation*, ed. John A. Scott (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1863), 94, 176, 203, 128, 265–66, 273–74.

175 21. Aptheker, *Slave Revolts*, 207–08; Watts, " 'We Do Not Live for Ourselves Only'," 6–8; Letter of John De Brahn, August 28, 1787, Cox-Parrish Wharton Coll., vol. 4, HSP;
113 Pierce Butler letter, July 4, 1789, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, box 31, fol. 1, HSP; Major Pierce Butler to R. Izard, September 8, 1789, SCL; the full account of the expeditions in Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry," 139.

(567) 22. Gerald Mullin, *Flight and Rebellion; Slave Revolts in Eighteenth Century Virginia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 140–161; Aptheker, *Slave Revolts*, 217–18, 241; Samuel G. Stoney, ed., "The Autobiography of William John Grayson" *South Carolina Historical*
(669) *and Genealogical Magazine* 49, no. 1 (January, 1948): 29–30; Theodore Rosengarten, *Tombee, Portrait of a Cotton Planter, Journal of Thomas B. Chaplin, 1812–1890* (New York: William Morrow 1986), 118; Carroll, *Slave Insurrections*, 66–67; Harding, *There Is a River*, 62–63.

23. Although white Loyalists were never really compensated for their losses in bondspeople during the War for Independence, Americans fared better after the War of 1812. The dispute over losses in slave property raged on after the Treaty of Ghent in 1814. But in 1822, with the Czar of Russia as arbitrator, the dispute was decided in favor of the United States. Britain agreed to pay $1,204,960 for 3,601 slaves, only half of the value claimed by American slave owners. Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, 56–57; Quarles, *Negro in the American Revolution*, 171–72; Harding, *There Is a River*, 62–63; Aptheker, *Slave Revolts*, 91; November 17, 1862, John Forsyth Mss., SCL.

24. Letter of Rachel Blanding, July 4, 1816, William Blanding Mss., SCL.

25. Ibid.; Trial of Negroes for Insurrection, July 3–17, 1816, Kershaw County Manscripts, SCL.

26. Quoted in Aptheker, *Slave Revolts*, 258–59; Trial of Negroes, SCL; Blanding Letter, July 25, 1816, SCL.

27. Letter of Rachel Blanding, December 2, 1808, July 25, 1813, SCL.

28. Lofton, *Vesey's Revolt*, 118.

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175 29. Ibid., 113–30.

113 30. "Historical Sketch of the Euhaw Baptist Church," submitted for private reading by church officers, 1928, Euhaw Baptist Church Mss., SCL; David Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World* (New York: Lewis Colby, 1848; repr. from 1813 ed.) 701–3; James W. Busch, "The Beaufort Baptist Church," Beaufort County Historical Society Paper, n.d., 4–5, Beaufort Township Library; John Archibald Armstrong, "Beaufort and the Sea Islands, Their History and Traditions," compiled from newspaper articles in the *Beaufort Republican*, 1867–1873, Beaufort Township Library; Joe Madison King, *A History of South Carolina Baptists* (Columbia: General Board, South Carolina Baptist Convention, 1964), 10–17, 26–38; quoted from James H. Cuthbert, *Life of Richard Fuller*, (New York: Scheldon Co., 1789), 12–13.

17 797 113 31. Lawton Family Papers, SCL: Charlotte Verstille to Nancy Verstille, February 9 and March 2, 1821, Tristram Verstille Papers, SCL: Chalmers D. Davidson, *The Last Foray: The South Carolina Plantations in 1860: A Sociological Study* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 96–99; Busch, "Beaufort Church," 6; Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 92–96, 146–47; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 13, 15, 78–79.

175 113 32. Brooks, "Silver Bluff Church," 172–82; "Early Negro Churches," 70–71; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, 12–13; Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 139. In the Peedee region, the Welsh Neck Church, formed in 1738, was a large congregation whose extensive black membership was organized into a separate church in 1779. This was a short-lived experiment, ending in 1782. At that time, some whites and a "greater number of blacks" were excommunicated by a new minister who discovered that upon examination, the blacks especially "appeared to be very ignorant of the nature of true religion." King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 39–44.

33. Brooks, "Silver Bluff Church," 174–76, 178, 182, 191; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, 29–31.

34. Mrs. J. H. Redding, *Life and Times of Jonathan Bryan 1708–1788* (Savannah: Morning News Print, 1901), 43; "Early Negro Churches," 77–79; Brooks, "Silver Bluff Church," 186–87; John Rippon, ed., *Baptist Annual Register for 1798–1801* (London: Dilly, Button, Thomas, 1802), 366–67; Raboteau, *Slave Religion*. Andrew's church spawned two sister churches in Savannah by the early nineteenth century.

35. Brooks, "Silver Bluff Church," 181–190; "Early Negro Churches," 83–87; Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, 11.

36. Wilson, *Loyal Blacks*, 10–12, 29–31; Walker, *Black Loyalists*, 4–5; Kathleen Tudor, "David George: Black Loyalist," *Nova Scotia Historical Society* 3, no. 1 (1983): 71–75.

37. Donald Blake Touchstone, "Planters and Slave Religion in the Deep South," (Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1973), 9–14; Redding, *Jonathan Bryan*, 44–45.

(797) 38. Quarles, *Negro in the American Revolution*, 135–40, 44–45; Matthew Tate to Benjamin Rush, October 1, 1792, Benjamin Rush Correspondence, vol. 7: 6, HSP.

175 39. Diary of John Bartram, 78–79, John Bartram Papers, HSP.

• 567 113 40. U.S. Census Office, *First Census, 1790* (Philadelphia: Childs and Swaine, 1791), 54; "Diary of Timothy Ford," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 45 (1944): 142–45.

41. Abigail Capers to Eliza Russell, March 25, 1971; James McBride Dabbs Papers, SHC.

(794) 42. John Bartram Diary, July 1, 1765–April 10, 1766, John Bartram Papers, HSP; Johnson, *Social History*, 18–26, 115–118; Armstrong, "Sea Islands History," 30; Euhaw Baptist Church Mss., March 14, 1834, SCL; Charlotte Verstille to Nancy Verstille, March 2, 1821, Tristram Verstille Papers, SCL.

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43. Richard Furman to Roger Williams, September 10, 1800, Richard Furman Papers, SCL.

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44. Charlotte Verstille to Nancy Verstille, February 9 and March 2, 1821, Tristram Verstille Papers, SCL.

45. Charles C. Jones, *The Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the United States* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969; repr. from 1842 ed.), 57, 60–61; Reverend Dr. Richard Furman, *Exposition of the Views of the Baptists, Relative to the Coloured Population in the United States, in A Communication to the Governor of South Carolina* (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1823), 15; Rules and Regulations of the Coloured Ministers, Elders and Members of Baptist Church in Charleston, SCL; Edmund Botsford to Richard Furman, March 10, October 12, 1796, October 15, 1808, Edmund Botsford Letters, BC.

46. Arnold Dallimore, *George Whitefield, Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth Century Revival*, 2 vols. (Gildford and London: Billing and Sons, 1970), II: 438; Rev. A. M. Chreitzberg, *Early Methodism in the Carolinas* (Nashville: Barbee and Smith, 1897), 32–34; Donald Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism, A Chapter in American Morality 1780–1845* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 3–6; Frederick A. Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism: A History of the United Methodists and Their Relations* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 59–60, 75; Albert Deems Betts, *History of South Carolina Methodism* (Columbia: Advocate Press, 1952), 192; F. A. Mood, *Methodism in Charleston* (Nashville: E. Stevenson and J. E. Evans, 1856), 23–24, 40, 48, 71, 128.

47. *Journal of the Rev. Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 3 vols. (New York: N. Bangs and T. Mason, 1821), I: 381–82; Chreitzberg, *Early Methodism*, 39–43; Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 7–9.

48. Phillips, *Appeal to Inhabitants of Charleston*, 22–23; Mood, *Methodism in Charleston* 71, 128; Asbury, *Journals*, II: 28–29.

49. Asbury, *Journals*, II: 241.

50. Norwood, *American Methodism*, 88–93; Albert M. Shipp, *History of Methodism in South Carolina* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), 467–71; "Christmas Agreement," January 2, 1795, HSSCC; James Jenkins, *Experience, Labours and Sufferings of Reverend J. Jenkins of the South Carolina Conference*, printed for the author in 1842, copy found at HSSCC; Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 10–21; H. Shelton Smith, *In His Image, But . . . Racism in Southern Religion, 1780–1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), 38–43.

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51. William Hammett Journal, entries for August 26, 1794, January 15, 1795, February 8, 1795, and February 15, 1795, Wm. Hammett Ms., SCL.

52. Ibid., January 15, 1795.

53. Smith, *In His Image, But*, 129–35.

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54. Hammett Journal, entries for January 15, 1795, February 8, 1795, February 15, 1795, SCL; Phillips, *Appeal of Inhabitants of Charleston*, 10–11, 15, 17, 21–22, 29.

55. Chreitzberg, *Early Methodism*, 78, 126; James O. Andrew, "On Methodism in Charleston," *MMQR* 12 (1830): 20–28; A. M. Travis, *Autobiography of the Reverend Joseph M. Travis*, (Nashville: E. Stevenson and F. A. Owens), 1855, 86–87; Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 21–26.

56. William M. Wightman, *Life of William Capers, Including an Autobiography* (Nashville: J. B. McFerrin, 1858), 136–37; Andrew, "Methodism in Charleston," 18–20; Shipp, *Methodism in South Carolina*, 167; Betts, *South Carolina Methodism*, 55–57.

57. Betts, *South Carolina Methodism*, 223–24; Carol George, *Segregated Sabbaths, Richard Allen and the Emergence of Independent Black Churches, 1760–1840* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 14–18, 29–32; Asbury, *Journals*, III: 22–23, 128.

175 777 *American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Harvard University 19 (1941): 3, 7; Wilfred D. Hambley, "Initiation of Boys in Angola," *American Anthrologist*, 37, ser. 2, (1935): 36–40.

112 28. *CAJ*, January 31, 1834.

29. Ibid. and June 20, 1934.

30. *CAJ*, January 31, 1834; Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 189–90. The First African Church's 175 association with white ministers and with the regional Baptist Association was anything but smooth. Because many members were slaves, the African Church was subjected to 112 jurisdictions contrary to Baptist policy. In January 1833, Marshall was barred from preaching in his own pulpit, and the Church expelled from Georgia's Sunbury Association. This struggle and turmoil lasted for five years. The Church managed to keep its status, but lost many members before returning to the good graces of white Baptists. See Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 189–94.

31. *CAJ*, October 4, 1833.

32. Ibid.

175 33. John Coburn to the Missionary Society, January 11, 1835, HSSCC; "Report of the Missionary Society," *Minutes of South Carolina Conference*, February 10, 1836, 16, HSSCC.

777 34. John L. Field to George W. Moore, March 21, 1833, HSSCC; *CAJ*, January 14, 112 1834, January 31, 1834, June 26, 1835, July 22, 1836. Field to Moore, March 21, 1833, HSSCC; *CAJ*, January 31, 1834, July 29, 1836; Pierce Butler to James Smith; March 19, 1839, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, box 38 Letterbook 1838–1940, HSP; *SCA*, June 26, November 13, 1840.

35. "Report of the Missionary Society," *Minutes of South Carolina Conference*, January 9, 1839, 18 and December 25, 1844, 19, HSSCC.

36. "Pastoral Address," *Minutes of South Carolina Conference*, December 25, 1844, 14, HSSCC; *Proceedings of the Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, May 13–15, 1845 on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes* (Charleston: B. Jenkins, 1845), 71–72; Norwood, *American Methodism*, 208–9; William W. Barnes, *The Southern Baptist Convention, 1845–1953* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1954), 35; *SCA*, February 23, 1844; "Report of the Missionary Society," *Minutes of South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, January 13, 1847, 11, and February 10, 1855, 18, HSSCC; *SCA*, May 25, 1855; *Minutes of South Carolina Conference*, December 13, 1860, HSSCC; Mason Crum, *Gullah, Negro Life in the Carolina Sea Islands* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1940), 188.

175 37. Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), passim, but see especially 3–7, 91–93, 119–20, 135–36, 89–91, 597–567 98, 658–59; Records of Coffin Point Plantation, St. Helena Island, 1800–1821, SCHS; John Stapleton Papers, St. Helena, 1790–1839, SCL: Diary of John Edwin Fripp, 1857–112 58 and 1865–68, Beaufort Township Library; Kemble, *Journal*, 42–45, 75; Theodore Rosengarten, *Tombee, Portrait of A Cotton Planter, Journal of Thomas B. Chaplin, 1812–1890* (New York: William Morrow, 1986) 30, 55; Diary of Laura M. Towne, Penn School Papers, SHC; Guion G. Johnson, *A Social History of the Sea Islands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930), 74–77, 104, 108–12; Major Pierce Butler to John Cooper, March 7, 1818, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, HSP.

38. Jenkins Mikell, *Rumblings of the Chariot Wheels* (Columbia: The State Co., 1923), 134–35; R. King, Jr. "On Management of the Butler Estate and Cultivation of Sugar Cane," *Southern Agriculturalist* (December, 1828): 597; Kemble, *Journal*, 42. For a different version, one which views the power of the driver as representing an enlargement of black autonomy for Lowcountry slaves in general, see Philip D. Morgan, "Black Society in the Lowcountry, 1760–1810," in Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the*

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American Revolution (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1983), 118–20. See also Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 371–74, 386–88.

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39. Towne Diary, 10; Edward Philbrick to Dr. L. B. Russell, June 15, 1863, Edward Atkinson Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (New York: Collier Books, 1962, repr. from 1870 ed.), 210–211; *SCA*, August 11, 1843.

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40. Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1769 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974); Johann Schöepf, *Travels in the Confederation, 1783–84*, trans. Alfred Morrison (Philadelphia: W. J. Campbell, 1911), 220–21.

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41. Lucius Gaston Moffatt and Joseph Médard Carrière, "A Frenchman Visits Charleston, 1817," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 49, no. 2 (April, 1948): 141; Johnson, *Social History*, 22–29; Mikell, *Chariot Wheels*, 19–20; R. F. W. Allston, "Sea Coast Crops of the South," *Debow's Review*, XVI (January–June, 1854): 596–98; William Elliot, "On Cultivation of Sea Island Cotton," *Southern Agriculturalist* I (April, 1828): 154; Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 70, 72; Crum, *Gullah*, 233–34, U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966, repr. from 1918 ed.), 153–54, 223–25. Philip Morgan takes a different view. He argues that Sea Island cotton cultivation resulted in less arduous slave labor and that the task system augmented black independence and autonomy. See his "Ownership of Property by Slaves in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Low Country," *Journal of Southern History*, no. 3 (August, 1983): 399–405, and "Black Society in the Low Country," 106–7, 120–21.

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42. Mikell, *Chariot Wheels*, 19–20; Allston, "Sea Coast Crops of the South," 596–98; Fripp Diary, passim; J. A. Turner, ed., *The Cotton Planter's Manual* (New York: Negro Universities Press, repr. from 1867 ed.) 135–36; Elliott, "Sea Island Cotton," 154; Thomas Lagare, "Preparation of Sea Island Cotton," *Southern Agriculturalist* II, ser. 2 (December, 1842): 626–27; R. King to P. Butler, October 31, 1824, December 5, 1824, box 33, folder 1, and March 1, 1835, box 33, fol. 5, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, HSP; Whitemarsh B. Seabrook, "A Memoir on the Origin, Cultivation and Uses of Cotton," *Proceedings of the Agricultural Convention and State Agricultural Society of South Carolina* (Charleston: Miller & Browne, 1844), 30; Diary of William F. Allen, 82–83 in William F. Allen Family Papers, 1775–1937, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 71–73.

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43. Fripp Diary, passim; Towne Diary, 10, 20, 24, 32–33; R. King to P. Butler, Oct. 19, 24, and 31, 1824, box 33, fol. 1, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, HSP; Kemble, *Journal* 174–75, 182–83, 189–92, 226–27, 233, 251, 263–64; King, Jr., "Management of Butler Estate," 3–4; Seabrook, "Memoir on Cotton," 30–31; Johnson, *Social History*; Elizabeth Ware Pearson, *Letters From Port Royal* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, repr., 1969, repr. from 1906 ed.), 13, 31, 114; Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*; The Port Royal Experiment (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), 126–27.

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44. Allen Diary, 136, 91; Towne Diary, 33.

45. Kemble, *Journal*, 120–21, 182–83, 189–205, 214, 226–27, 233, 263.

46. Ibid., 135–36, 79–80.

47. Coffin Point Records Overseer report for 1818, SCHS; Fripp Diary, passim; Crum, *Gullah*, 244–45; Wightman, *Life of Capers*, 291; Pinckney, *Address*, 23–24 (Appendix); Johnson, *Social History*, 28–29, 106; W. E. B. DuBois, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969; repr. from 1896 ed.), 180–86; James H. Cuthbert, *Life of Richard Fuller* (New York: Sheldon Co., 1878), 198; Federal Writers Program, Georgia, *Drums and Shadows* (Westport, Conn.:

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Greenwood Press, 1973; repr. of 1940 ed.), xviii–xix. Civil War missionaries reported seeing Africans in the Sea Islands. Towne Diary, 12, reads: “I saw at church from Gabriel Eddings plantation a woman brought from Africa. Her face was tatooed. She seemed of a more vigorous stock”; Harriett Ware, related an account of her meeting a black steward from the *Wabash* in Port Royal. He had just returned from Africa where a slave ship *Ariel* and its slave-pirate were taken. “He gave us a most interesting account of the whole affair, as he went on board with the Captain when he ordered the hatches to be opened and the nine hundred blacks were discovered.” Pearson, *Port Royal*, 225.

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48. *SCA*, May 1, 1840; Lorenzo D. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1969; repr. from 1949 ed.), 5, 151; Arthur Sumner to Nina Hartshorn, May 18, 1862, Penn School Papers, v. 4, SHC; David Thorpe to John Mooney, January 25, 1863, Dabbs Papers, Thorpe Series, SHC.

49. Allen Diary, passim and 139.

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50. *CAJ*, January 31, 1834; Federal Writers Program, *Drums and Shadows*, Chapter 6; ield to Moore, March 21, 1833, HSSCC.

51. *CAJ*, January 31, 1834, November 20, 1835, January 22, 1836.

52. *CAJ*, July 22, 1836.

53. Ibid., June 26, 1835; *SCA*, June 26, 1840, June 26, 1843.

54. *Proceedings of Charleston Meeting*, 48–49.

55. *SCA*, June 26, 1840; *CAJ*, July 17, 1835.

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56. John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972 ed.), 72; Crum, *Gullah*, 189; Kemble, *Journal*, 58; *CAJ*, February 7, 1834, April 25, 1834, September 25, 1835, July 22, 1836; *SCA*, May 24, 1839, June 30, 1843, September 29, 1843.

57. William Capers, *A Catechism for the Use of the Methodist Missions* (Charleston: J. S. Burges, 1833), passim; *SCA*, January 31, 1851.

58. Andrew, “Slave Population,” 317–18; “Report of the Missionary Society,” *Minutes of South Carolina Conference*, February 10, 1836, 20, HSSCC; *SCA*, January 26, 1838, June 30, 1843; Charles C. Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847), 14; Wightman, *Life of Capers*, 295–96. Quoted in John Spencer Bassett, *The Southern Plantation Overseer, as Revealed in His Letters* (Northhampton, Mass: Smith College, 1925), 14 -15.

59. John Bunch to Missionary Society, South Carolina Conference, January 11, 1835, HSSCC; Pinckney to Capers, January 24, 1835, HSSCC; *CAJ*, April 10, 1833, September 9, 1833, January 24, 1835, June 26, 1835, July 22, 1836; *SCA*, December 22, 1843, February 23, 1847; Wightman, *Life of Capers*, 298–99.

60. Bunch to Missionary Society, January 11, 1835, HSSCC; *CAJ*, February 7, 1834, June 13, 1834, October 17, 1834, June 26, 1835; *SCA*, April 8, 1842, January 29, 1847, May 6, 1848, March 28, 1851; Crum, *Gullah*, 218.

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61. *SCA*, July 7, 1843.

62. Ibid.

63. *SCA*, July 14, 1843, September 15, 1843, September 29, 1843, August 13, 1847, May 18, 1849, September 6, 1850, May 25, 1855.

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64. John McKim to Mrs. Wendell Garrison, April 20, 1864. Antislavery Papers, Rare Book Room, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y. The most well-known individual who argues that Gullah music came from Methodist hymns is Guy B. Johnson, *Folk Culture on St. Helena Island* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930), ix–xi, 6–8, 74–84; Albert Deems Betts, *History of South Carolina Methodism* (Columbia: Advocate Press, 1952), 159–68. Betts provides a history of the camp meetings in South Carolina and lists

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113 stille, March 2, 1831, Tristram Verstille Papers, SCL; *Minutes of the Savannah River Baptist Association*, 1802, October 17, 1817, November 27, 1830, BC.

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[795] 2. James Busch, "The Beaufort Baptist Church," Beaufort County Historical Society Paper, n.d., 13, Beaufort Township Library, Beaufort, South Carolina; *CAJ*, January 6, 1832; William M. Baker, *The Life and Labours of the Reverend Daniel Baker, D. D., Pastor & Evangelist* (Philadelphia: William & Alfred Martien, 1859), 145–56; James H. Cuthbert, *Life of Richard Fuller* (New York: Sheldon Co., 1879), 67–68; *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 22, 1831, 24, November 26, 1831, 18, 20, November 23, 1833, 10, BC; see Appendix C.A Table C.1 lists the churches within the Savannah River Baptist Association in 1833, and indicates the number of baptisms for that year.

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113 3. *Minutes of the Euhaw Baptist Church, 1831–1975*, December 21, 1831, 11, February 18, 1832, 12, June 23, 1832, 16, August, 1832, 18, SCL; James W. Busch, "Beaufort Church," 15; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 79–82, 104–5; Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 147. Some Episcopalian planters participating in the 1831 revival subsequently became liberal contributors to the Methodist cause of religious instruction of the slaves. *Minutes of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, February 10, 1836, 22, January 9, 1839, 18–19, HSSCC; *CAJ*, January 26, 1838. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 20, 1834, BC.

4. Appendix C.A see tables C.1 and C.2. The fluctuation noticeable in the membership of mainland churches occurred because new churches drew members away from older congregations. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November, 1834, taken from the pages of the *Southern Baptist and General Intelligencer*, January 3, 1835, BC.

5. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 21, 1835, 4, BC; Busch, "Beaufort Church," 16; Charles C. Jones, *The Religious Instruction of the Negroes of the United States* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969; repr. from 1842 ed.), 96–98; Chalmers D. Davidson, *The Last Foray: The South Carolina Plantations in 1860: A Sociological Study* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 96–98.

6. Bynum Shaw, *Divided We Stand: The Baptists in American Life* (Durham: Moore Publishing, 1874), 113–14; Newman, *Baptist Church in the United States*, 304–6; Guion G. Johnson, *A Social History of the Sea Islands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930), 45, 103–4, 117; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 15; *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 24, 1849, BC. William W. Barnes, *The Southern Baptist Convention, 1845–1953* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1954), 19; H. Shelton Smith, *In His Image, But . . . Racism in Southern Religion, 1780–1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), 53–55; Reverend Dr. Richard Furman, *Exposition of the Views of the Baptists, Relative to the Colored Population in the United States, in A Communication to the Governor of South Carolina* (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1823), 6.

7. Shaw, *Divided We Stand*, 113–16; Barnes, *Southern Baptist Convention*, 20–21; Smith, *In His Image, But*, 117–21, 127–28; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 227; *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, September 12, 1840, 9, BC; *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 21, 1835, 4, November 25, 1837, 5, October 24, 1840, 3, BC.

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113 8. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 24, 1838, 6, November 23, 1839, 11, October 23, 1841, 12, November 26, 1842, 4–5.

9. Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 153, 227; Busch, "Beaufort Church," 16; *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 21, 1835, 4, BC.

10. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 25, 1841, BC.

11. Jones, *Religious Instruction*, 210–11; John B. Adger, D. D., *My Life and Times, 1810–1899* (Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1899), 198–99; *Proceedings*

A,[For Appendix C, see Category 795, pp. 337-339--Analyst]

35. Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller, 140–58*; Smith, *In His Image, But*, 133–36, 138–39; King, South Carolina Baptists, 211–12. 175 113

36. David Donald, ed., *Inside Lincoln's Cabinet* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1954), 69–70.

37. William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South*, Fletcher Pratt, ed. (New York: Harper Brothers, 1854), 76–77; Busch, "Beaufort Church," sections entitled "Work among the Negroes," 3 and "Richard Fuller and Slavery," 1; *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, October 9, 1840, 11, October 8, 1841, 23, October 8, 1842, 39, BC; *Minutes, Euhaw Baptist Church*, October 9, 1836, 59; September 24, 1838, 66, SCL; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 104–6; C. C. Pinckney to William Capers, January 24, 1835, HSSCC; *SCA*, September 29, 1843; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina* II (2) 72–73, 184–85, 279, III (3) 202, 274. 17 113 567 794

38. *Proceedings of Charleston Meeting*, 49.

39. *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, "Origin of the Colored Societies," October 7, 1839, Business Meeting in which the organization of the societies is discussed, 271–74, January 7, 1842 and November 11, 1840, 12, BC; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 83–104; *CAJ*, January 31, 1834; Field to Moore, March 21, 1833, HSSCC.

40. See Chapter 6. 175 113

41. *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, 12, BC. 794

42. Ibid., 271–72. 567

43. Ibid., 271–74; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, II: (2) 185.

44. *Proceedings of Charleston Meeting*, 48–49; *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, April 9, 1847, 111, passim, BC; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, II (2) 184–85; Rev. Mansfield French to Revs. Whipple and Jocelyn in Elizabeth Ware Pearson, *Letters from Port Royal* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1969; repr. from 1906 ed.), 20. The spelling generally is *Praise* House. Black and white Northerners living among the Gullahs during the Civil War spelled the word thusly. But Samuel Lawton did research in the Sea Islands in the 1920s and indicates the word was "Prays," named for its function as a place of prayer. According to Lawton, Gullah pronunciation of the flat "a" and dropping of the final syllable on many words explain why no difference was noted between "prays" and "praise." Lawton interviewed former Sea Island slaves in the 1920s who referred to the plantation meetinghouse as "Pray House" without the "s" sound, or they pronounced two syllables very distinctly, "pray-ers house." Informants stated it was "Way ooner go fur pray." Gullahs changed verbs into nouns without adding the extra ending. Thus, at the meetinghouse, "One pray. Den Anudder lead a pray'—Dat make two prays." Lawton's argument is reinforced by Patricia Guthrie's more recent fieldwork in the 1970s. According to Guthrie, "Praise houses are also known locally and in the literature as prayer and pray houses." The Gullahs' mastering of double meaning however may also inform the discussion. They often asked white Northerners to "jine praise wid we." Also their anthem, "New Jerusalem," stated, "Sing God praise both night and day." Thus the Gullahs went to the meetinghouse to *praise* and *pray*. Samuel Lawton, "The Religious Life of Coastal and Sea Island Negroes," (Ph.D. dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1939), 54–56; Patricia Guthrie, "Praise House Worship and Litigation Among Afro-Americans on a South Carolina Sea Island," Paper, Sixth Annual Martin Luther King Lecture Series, Purdue University, February 21, 1980, 1. 175 113 567 346

45. Rawick *American Slave, South Carolina* II (2) 279–80, III (3) 200–202; Diary of John Edwin Fripp, 1857–58 and 1865–68, 24, Beaufort Township Library; Russell, *My Diary North and South*, 71–77; Cuthbert, *Life of Fuller*, 15–20; Minutes, *Beaufort Baptist Church*, April 9, 1841, 15, May 14, 1842, 34, BC. August 12, 1843, 61–62; October 1, 1853, 180, 175 113 567

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175 113 •567 BC. A good example of how little attention some masters paid to slaves is provided in the T. B. Chaplin Journal, edited by Theodore Rosengarten. Chaplin probably spent more time supervising his property than most Sea Island planters. However Rosengarten writes: "Because Chaplin had very little to do with his slaves outside of work, we seldom see them in their quarters and only then when peace is disturbed." T. B. Chaplin was on the Episcopalian side of the family and "appears to have invested nothing in the spiritual welfare of his slaves." Some of his slaves did join the Island Baptist church through the "praise house." Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 145, 147, 151.

[795] [794] 46. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 25, 1854, November 23, 1855, BC; *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, June 10, 1843, 61–62, September 4, 1852, 171, September 12, 1854, 197, November 7, 1857, 241–42, BC; Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 147; Pierce Butler to A. Marvin, March 19, 1839, Letterbook, 1838–1840, box 38, Wistar Papers, Butler Section, HSP.

175 113 47. James Leo Garrett, Jr., *Baptist Church Discipline: An Historical Introduction to the Practices of Baptist Churches, with Particular Attention to the Summary of Church Discipline Adopted in 1773 by the Charleston Association* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1962), 3–4, 10–18, 28; King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 62–63. The Baptist religion as it developed in the Lowcountry from Georgetown southward to the Beaufort District was considerably different from that planted in the upcountry. The latter was closer to the frontier Baptist tradition. Unlike "Regular" Baptists of the Lowcountry, the "frontier theology" was a compromise of Arminian and Calvinist views. King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 38, 148; Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 440–43.

48. Garrett, *Baptist Church Discipline*, 39–44; J. William Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), 100–04; Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 180–81; King, *South Carolina Baptists*, 38, 148–55; Daniel W. Hollis, "The Role of the Church in South Carolina History," *Journal of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society* 4 (November, 1978): 11–13; Smith, *In His Image, But*, Chapter 2.

175 113 795 794 49. *Minutes, Euhaw Baptist Church*, passim, SCL; *Minutes, Baptist Church at Black Creek*, 1828–1922, 15–59, SCL; Jones, "Old Black Swamp Church"; *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, October 9, 1840, 10–11, BC; For information about discipline of slaves in other churches, see Cornelius, "God's Schoolmasters," 228–40; Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry*, 48–52.

50. *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, August 12, 1843, 61–62.

51. Ibid., November 11, 1840, 12, April 5, 1852, 166, October 7, 1859, 272–73.

52. Ibid., October 8, 1840, 11, July 9, 1841, 19, July 8, 1842, 34; September 8, 1843, 63; April 5, 1855, 203–4.

53. Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, II (2) 184; Allen Diary, 23, 57.

54. *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, November 9, 1844, 83, April 5, 1852, 166, October 7, 1859, 272–73, BC; *Minutes, Euhaw Baptist Church*, February 5, 1832, 11, September 1848, 75, SCL.

175 113 685 55. Fripp Diary, 60, Beaufort Township Library; Johnson, *Social History*: 47, 54; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, III (3) 200–201, 272; Diary of William F. Allen, 62, in William F. Allen Family Papers, 1775–1937, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

[795] [794] 56. John W. Blassingame, ed., *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews and Autobiographies* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 374, 381; Forten, "Sea Islands," Part I, 668; Diary of Laura M. Towne, 15, Penn School Papers, SHC.

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57. *CAJ*, January 31, 1834; Allen Diary, 37, 71, 87–88; Rev. W. T. Richardson to Rev. Whipple, July 3, 1863, AMA; Sherwood, "Walker Journal," 32–33, 40–41.

58. Blassingame, *Slave Testimony*, 377; Charlotte Forten, "Life on the Sea Islands," Part II, *Atlantic Monthly* 13 (June, 1864): 674; Allen Diary, 32, 143; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, II (1) 158–59, 162, 179–81, III (3) 273–75.

59. Allen Diary, 47–48, 103, 118, 136; Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 150–54, 164–65.

60. Allen Diary, 48, 62, 72, 84.

61. Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 456–58.

62. Ibid., 124.

63. *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, March 31, 1849, 133, May 5, 1849, 134, June 30, 1849, 135, BC.

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64. Thomas Wentworth Higginson to Louisa Higginson, October 23, 1863, Papers of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Allen Diary, 91–92; Typescript copy of Diary of Laura M. Towne (varies from Ms. Diary), April 3, 1862, Penn School Papers, vol. I, SHC. Theodore Rosengarten perhaps in support of arguments favoring paternalism on the Sea Islands (a point on which we disagree), maintains that black sentiments toward masters "were sometimes not always understood or accurately rendered by the people who solicited information." He cites by example, Laura Towne's reaction to Clarence Fripp's relationship with his slave Rachel. They lived together openly, and during the war, Fripp deeded over his plantation to Rachel. Towne said Fripp "led an infamous life, too bad to write of, to vile to speak of." Rosengarten implies that Towne's disgust toward Fripp centered on his living with Rachel. Yet Laura Towne was not so naive as to condemn Fripp for this alone, However, she was very upset upon learning that Clarence and his two brothers passed Rachel around for sexual favors. "She lived with her master and his two brothers infamously and her children are almost white," wrote Towne. Thus Towne reacted to the wanton license exercised by the Fripps toward slave women. Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 166; Towne Diary Typescript, February 14, 1864, Penn School Papers, vol. 2, SHC.

65. *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, 162–274; Blassingame, *Slave Testimony*, 358–61, 450–53; Sherwood, "Walker Journal," 34; Fripp Diary, 60; Allen Diary, 103; Towne Diary, 14, 20.

66. Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 214–20; Towne Diary Typescript, April 3, 1862; Forten, "Sea Islands," Part I, 593.

67. *Minutes, Prince William Baptist Church*, May 20, 1865, 107, SCL.

68. March 14, 1824, in Lawton Family Papers, SCL; Black Swamp Church Mss., SCL; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, II (1) 158; William Tillinghast, *Address to Baptist Ministers of the U. S. Who Hold Slaves by A Minister of the Ministeral Conference of the Black River Association* (Antwerp:, 1845), New-York Historical Society.

69. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 21, 1835, 3–4; November 25, 1849, 9, BC; *Minutes, Beaufort Baptist Church*, September 12, 1840, 9, April 9, 1841, 15, BC.

70. *Minutes, Savannah River Baptist Association*, November 25, 1839, 9, BC.

71. Elizabeth Hyde Botume, *First Days Amongst the Contrabands* (New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1968; repr. from 1893 ed.), 158–61; Rawick, *American Slave, South Carolina*, III (3) 201; Blassingame, *Slave Testimony*, 381.

72. Blassingame, *Slave Testimony*, 374–76.

73. Rosengarten, *Tombee*, 155; Laura M, Towne to Wendell Phillips Garrison, June 8, 1867, Antislavery Papers, Rare Book Room Cornell University.

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164–66; Edwin S. Williams to Rev. S. S. Jocelyn, January 28, 1863, AMA. For an interesting discussion of the fusion of Old and New Testament figures, see Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), 252–55. 175 113 (779)

7 George P. Rawick, *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, 19 vols., *South Carolina Narratives*, vols. 2 & 3, in 4 parts (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing, 1972), II (2) 180–81. (795)

8. Charlotte Forten, "Life on the Sea Islands," Part II, *Atlantic Monthly* 13 (June, 1864): 672.

9. Mansfield French to Revs. Whipple and Jocelyn, n.d., AMA; Ira Berlin, ed., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861–1867, Series II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 49–50; Allen Diary, 57–58; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 145–48; Diary of Laura M. Towne, 26, Penn School Papers, SHC. It is interesting to note that "Old Marcus' " "Massa" was Daniel Pope of the Oaks Plantation. Pope was an important individual in St. Helena's Baptist Church. The Oaks was one of the plantations where Northerners saw so many signs of "Ill-treatment," and was referred to as "de cruelest place." Towne Diary, 32–33. 175 113 771

10. Arthur Sumner to Lt. Joseph Clark, January 23, 1863, Penn School Papers, vol. 4 SHC: Botume, *Amongst the Contrabands*, 218; Higginson, *Army Life*, 231–39.

11. Paul Radin, "Status, Phantasy, and the Christian Dogma," in Clifton Johnson, ed., *God Struck Me Dead: Religious Conversion Experiences and Autobiographies of Negro Ex-Slaves* (Nashville: Social Science Institute, Fisk University, 1945), Foreword, i–ix. 113 771

12. There is much that is interesting and convincing in Radin's analysis of slave religion. But he does not take into account fully, the effects of slave religion on social cohesion in the quarters. Radin ignores the cultural and communal components of slave religion—its most progressive elements. He apparently views slave religion in mainly Christian terms, referring to the slaves' "sin" and desire for cleanliness and rebirth. The self-doubt and vacillation which he maintains the Christian conversion experience dispelled represents an analysis of the role of Christianity only on one level. It does not take full cognizance of other influences on the development of black religion. Perhaps Radin attributes too much to Christianity, and views the slaves' perception of Christianity too simply. The Gullahs' conception of sin differed from that which the masters attempted to instill. The slaves looked beyond the concept of a personal God, an "other world," a "rebirth," and beyond an attitude toward sin that worked against their interests. We agree with Radin that religion helped the slaves escape "demoralization" and "neurosis." Radin credits this "escape" from the degrading features of enslavement to Christianity. But communal and cultural development also provided that extra layer of faith. His interpretation of the psychological features and effects of the conversion experience would be even more insightful if a broader approach to slave religion were taken. Ibid. 771 567 ●

13. John W. Blassingame, ed., *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews and Autobiographies* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 377; Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*, 132; Dorothy Sterling, *Captain of the Planter: The Story of Robert Smalls*, (New York: Doubleday, 1958) 32–33; Ames, *Dixie Diary*, 45; Towne Diary, passim. Northern teachers related that the Gullahs sometimes found ways to gain some literacy during slavery. Two house servants "picked it up from their master's children," letter by letter. Several other people learned from hymn books. Some were never taught but picked up letters "here and there," which enabled them to read "easy sentences." Allen Diary, 62. 113 175 (212)

14. Berlin, *Freedom: Black Military Experience*, 46–54; Allen Diary, 155; Leon F. Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 68–70, 75–76, 93–97; Higginson, *Army Life*, 39–40. (701)

Rev. G. C. Brown

MY FATHER WAS BORN A SLAVE

567 291 My father was born a slave. He was fourteen years old before he had a shoe on his foot. And across the hills of South Carolina you could track him. They had big snows in the winter, and he wrapped his feet in gunny sacks. He said you could track him through his blood in the snow as he went out to bring the cows home during those snowy nights. In the morning he'd get up and run the cow up from where he slept all night to warm his feet, warm his hand with the warmth of their bodies. He was fourteen years old before he had his first pair of shoes.

567 (563) My grandmother was half Indian. 'Course the Indians are stubborn, supposed to be. And being a half Indian and then being a slave also, she was very stubborn. She said that her master was a very cruel man. Since she was stubborn, he'd take her by the ears to the corner of a house, and just bang her head against the corner until she'd bleed. Come out covered in blood.

She died in the insane hospital in Columbia. You couldn't find three square inches on her head where there wasn't a scar when she died. And well, you find naked places all through her head where she was beaten until she be beaten into unconsciousness. Sometime she come to herself under a tree; Master had knocked her out. In her latter years it was discovered that during one of those forays the skull was crushed into her brain. The older she got, the worse it got. So she died at the age of seventy-seven, right there in Columbia Hospital. I knew her. I went to her funeral.

4. Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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Mrs. Betsy Pinckney

THAT WAS THE TIME WHEN PEACE DIDN'T DECLARE

● 567 My grandmother was Hannah Seabrook. She raised me up and told me a lot about Rebel Times. Old Hannah Seabrook was a cooker and a washer. Her first husband got sold. Yes sir! They sell my father's daddy. Sell him for money.

When my father was coming up he used to have to go see what old Master wanted him to do. He was just a boy and couldn't do none of that heavy work. So the old Master would have him shine he shoes. One day he found some finger marks on 'em and knock my father down the stairs. Good thing I wasn't living in those days—you would of had to kill me first. But that was in the time when peace didn't declare.

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177 When the war came through, my daddy, Cyrus Jenkins, was just a young boy. That time he was in the creek—had to dig the mud and mud the field for what they gonna plant that year. My daddy just up and ran off with the Yankees. He followed the Yankee until peace declared. My grandma didn't see him for four years. When he come back Grandma went to the depot. When she see her one son she drop her little bit of clothes and bind the son. That's right, had only one raggedy soldier coat and nothing else but that.

Mrs. Betsy Pinckney

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SHE TAKE THE SCRAP AND MAKE A LITTLE DRESS FOR ME

I born in 1878, the twentieth day of November. I was my ma's seventh child. Everybody run for give me name. I grow up in the white people house. I do the small things—I could thread needle for grandma, man. And they make me a little dress, you know. I even wash the Missus' feet. That's right, sir! That's right! Wash her feet in the basin. And when she was the only dressmaker 'round the village, she take the scrap and make a little dress for me.

My grandma had a scarf handkerchief—a white handkerchief she brought from Rebel Time, and when she died I tie he head with that. That's right. Yes ma'am!

121 197 consequence of their situation. The rise of plantation pidgin and creole languages can be documented in the Americas where slave labor was used during the early colonial period, and later in other colonies and in Hawaii where contract plantation labor was used. The West African immigrants to colonial South Carolina followed this third pattern of linguistic adaptation.

175 567 Brought to work the rice plantation in the marshlands of coastal South Carolina, the West Africans provided the labor which made for the initial economic success of the Carolina colony. A strong case has been made that they also provided the knowledge of rice cultivation and processing which allowed the early European land-owners to effectively adapt to a sub-tropical environment so unlike their native Europe (Wood, 1974). At any rate, the establishment of rice as the base of the colony's economy coincided with the heaviest period of slave importation. Around 1730 two new ports were opened to share the growing export trade with the initial port at Charleston. One of these ports was Port Royal, some sixty miles south of Charleston. The other was Georgetown, sixty miles to the north of Charleston. The early rice 121 plantation area in Georgetown County along a strip of land between the rivers and the Atlantic Ocean is the focus of the present linguistic study.

175 the Civil War, a combination of planter bankruptcy, successive years of disastrous flood tides, and the opening up of lands further west which could be cultivated by machinery instead of expensive hand labor, put an end to the rice economy. The economic base of the district again became chiefly forest products. In the early 1900's the former rice plantations were bought up by rich Northern industrialists for use as vacation homes, bringing welcome outside money to an economically depressed region.

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567 The close relationship between rice as Georgetown's economic base and the large numbers of African immigrants brought to this district can be seen in the South Carolina figures for slave importation during the period of the establishment of rice as a major crop. Rogers reports, "From 1720 through 1726 the average annual importation was 616 slaves. The average for the years 1731-1738 was 2,089. The opening up of the lands around Georgetown was one of the chief reasons for the increase" (1970:29). Most of the slaves were bought in Charleston and then transported up to Georgetown by boat through Winyah Bay. A few, however, were brought directly from West Africa through the Georgetown port, with 112 in 1774 being the largest number reported by Rogers. For a five-year period between 1735 and 1740, a full seventy percent of the slaves brought to South Carolina seem to have come from the Angola region of Africa (Wood, 1974:335), long considered a possible source of the term Gullah used for both

175 the coastal blacks and for their language. Other large
•567 numbers came from the Coast of Guinea, Gambia, the Gold Coast, the Windward Coast, and other undesignated parts of West Africa. Very few originated in the West Indies during this period. From reports of travellers and missionaries, indications are that the earliest slaves imported from the West Indies around 1700 spoke a more standard variety of English than did the large number of immigrants who came directly from West Africa (Wood, 1974:175). Hancock (1975) maintains that the variety of English spoken in Barbados, the source of the first South Carolina slaves, was never a creole, but was a local metropolitan variety of English. For the direct ancestor of Gullah, Hancock posits a Guinea Coast Creole which developed in the latter half of the sixteenth century on the upper Guinea Coast, and was brought to the new colony by the slavers and immigrants from that area. While the time and place of origin of the language adopted by the immigrants from West Africa may be impossible to determine with certainty, the conditions for the development of an interlanguage were present. Large numbers of people were uprooted from their homelands and cultural traditions and thrown together with others of similar status, speaking several different languages and needing to communicate with each other on a frequent basis.

175 The language background of the European settlers in the Georgetown district was primarily English, although some

175 French Huguenot families were in their number and were allowed to use the Book of Common Prayer in a French version (Rogers, 1970:20). The early landowners were usually sons of English and French planters in the Charleston area, trying their luck in the northern frontier. To the west of Georgetown proper, in what is now Williamsburg County, townships were established by Scots-Irish and Welsh settlers. Scots were frequently merchants and officeholders in the district. From such a mixture, it is safe to assume that it was not always the standard English dialect of southern England which was spoken by the European landowners and their overseers to the West African slaves. The McDavids (1951) and others have noted the preservation of seventeenth century English dia forms in isolated Gullah-speaking areas.

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(162) Very early in the history of the Georgetown district, Africans outnumbered Europeans. Federal census figures of 1830 indicate that 1,940 white persons and 18,000 persons of color (both slave and free) resided in the district (Wikramanayake, 1973). An important factor in the low numbers of Europeans was their susceptibility to the malaria-bearing mosquito which thrived in the fresh-water swamplands. During the summer months and fall, which constituted the malaria season, the landowners moved to homes on the ocean or further inland. West Africans, on the other hand, had a genetic tolerance for the malaria parasite. A Grand Jury Presentment in Georgetown for the fall term of 1835 reported

175 that ten masters of 1,700 slaves had been absent from their
567 property for the last twelve months, and that some 15,000
slaves on the tide swamp plantations were managed by no more
than forty proprietors during the summer months (Wikramanayake,
1973:158-9). The general picture which emerges of the district in the century between 1730 and 1830 is that of a region whose population was overwhelmingly of West African descent, whose economy was based on intensive hand labor of a crop familiar to many of these immigrants in their homelands, and whose most prevalently spoken language was an English creole.

While in its more prosperous days Georgetown was a
175 cultural center and was far from isolated either economically or socially from other populous centers in the sta
its position after the Civil War was one of geographic isolation in important respects. With the fall of the plantation economy, boat traffic along the extensive network of rivers in the county was no longer reliable nor frequent. The rivers and marshes which had provided the flood waters for the rice fields impeded the building of roads. As late
484 as 1918, a trip inland to the state capitol, some one hundred miles away, could be a two-day trip over unmarked sand or mud roads (Vaughan, 1969). Until the major bridges were built to span the rivers emptying into Winyah Bay in the early twentieth century, a trip from rural areas to the county seat at Georgetown for supplies or legal transactions could

174 [101] or wrongly, as far back as 1822 the official governing body of the City of Charleston regarded Gullah as a corrupted form of Angola.

[101] A second, more probable suggestion is that Gullah comes from the name of the Liberian group of tribes known as Golas living on the West Coast between Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast. These Golas were formerly numerous and powerful, but have now dwindled to a small remnant tribe dwelling some thirty miles inland from Monrovia, the chief sea-port of Liberia. "The dialect of the West Coast, from which came these Gullah negroes," says a leading authority[5] on the subject, "was early commented upon as peculiarly harsh, quacking, flat in intonation, quick, clipped, and peculiar even in Africa. Bosman, the Dutch sailor, described its peculiar tonality, and calls its speakers the 'quaquas, because they gabbled like geese'."

174 567 [197] Whether originally from Angola or from Liberia, these Gullah tribesmen after their enforced immigration to our shores formed a distinct and peculiar group. Their resolute and persistent nature evidently assisted in impressing their dialectal characteristics on weaker and more plastic Negroes from elsewhere brought in contact with them, and definitely fixed for two hundred years the tonality of the Negro dialect of the Carolina and Georgia coast.[6]

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[127] [5] Mr. John Bennett of Charleston, author of *Master Skylark*, *Madame Margot*, etc., who has been studying the Gullah language and history for a score of years. His article "Gullah; A Negro Patois" (*The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Part I, Oct., 1908; Part II, Jan., 1909) is a most scholarly and penetrating treatment. The present paper draws deeply from it, as also from the work of Mr. Gonzales. Mr. Bennett feels strongly that the Angola derivation for Gullah is quite without foundation; and reiterates his belief in a personal letter to the writer: "God alone knows all the sources of Gullah, (as a language) its vocables, its accents, etc.; but its name came from that odd, primitive people, back of Monrovia, whose name has been spelled various ways, but which, as we have it, is Gullah."

A third derivation, almost certainly wrong, may be mentioned in passing. Rev. Robert Hamill Nassau, M.D., who was for forty years a missionary in the French Congo, thought the Gullahs might come ultimately from a powerful tribe of Cagual or Comi Negroes called Gwalla.

[6] Many of these Negroes were brought to the West Indies and the Carolinas at an early date. The earliest were tempered by servitude in the islands of Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, San Domingo, etc., before arrival in Carolina. Later the untempered Africans were brought direct from the West Coast to Charleston.

An instance of the marked individuality and persistence of Gullah, even under adverse conditions, is told by John G. Williams in *De Ole Plantation*, (Preface V.): "More, perhaps, than a hundred years ago certain negroes were carried from a rice plantation in Colleton County and put on a cotton plantation in Barnwell District,

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175 Of equal importance, if that be possible, with the native
•567 quality of the Gullah vernacular, was the environment
under which they lived in this country. They seem to
have been imported almost exclusively to the sea-islands
and coast of two states, South Carolina and Georgia. This
section, from Colonial days to the Civil War, was the richest
and most cultured of that part of the South. Rice, the
[243] chief low-country crop of that day, was extremely lucrative
under slave-labor, as was the silky, long-staple sea-
[248] island cotton. Large plantations of thousands of acres
were the rule, on which the wealthy planters lived in characteristic,
often feudal prosperity.[4]

000 Even today, two generations after the disintegration of the social forces that brought them into existence, there remain impressive traces of these fine old estates, some abandoned and fallen into ruins, a few still kept up, some turned into hunting preserves, some still being farmed on a smaller scale. They stretch in an irregular chain along the coast, inlets, and tidal rivers, each with the gray-weathered dwelling-house in its moss-draped grove of live-oaks; the big barns and slave-quarters off to one side, consisting of a double row of one-story cabins, now in ruins, lining the "street"; square mile after square mile of woodland, marshland, and level fields, once planted to rice, but

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[174] as it was called then, but to this day (1896) the older ones of that set of negroes, who grew up before the war, speak as pure Gullah as their grandfathers and grand-
[197] mothers spoke on Ashepoo. They seem to have been scarcely affected in their low-country Gullah speech by the white people that were numerous and all around them and the negroes native to that neighborhood, who talked so differently to themselves."

[4] If this seems to savor of the high-flown idyllic plantation tradition, fostered by professional Southerners, romantic literature, melodrame, and minstrel balladry, be it recalled that the ideal picture came closest to being realized in tide-water Virginia and in the rice districts of South Carolina. In regard to these localities it would be hard to overstate the facts. "Charles Dudley Warner, for example, dazzled by the sheen of life in the Carolina rice districts exclaimed, 'Nowhere in this leveling age . . . so much splendor'." F. P. Gaines, *The Southern Plantation*, Columbia University Press, 1924, p. 64. "Phillips says of the rice section: 'The towns were in sentiment and interest virtually a part of the plantation community and many prospering townsmen looked toward plantation retirement, carrying, as it did, in some degree, the badge of gentility, as the crown of their careers." *Ibid.*, 145, 146.

[113] Crevecoeur (*Letters from an American Farmer*, London, 1782.) called the life around Charleston 'the gayest in America'; "Olmstead himself (*Seaboard Slave States, A Journey Through the Seaboard Slave States*, New York, 1866) refers to the rice planters as 'having less vulgar display and more intrinsic elegance than in any distinct class among us'." *Ibid.*, p. 164.

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000 now with ditches choked, banks and dam breached by time and tide, grown up in wild rice and marsh grass; the ideal habitat of deer, duck, bob-white, and wild-turkey—the hunter's paradise.

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567 Before the war, each plantation was a little world apart. The slaves lived together, segregated in their own special quarters. The Negroes outnumbered the whites in the ratio of tens and hundreds to one, and only the house-servants and body-servants came into close contact with their owners. The large majority of field-hands habitually saw only each other, their overseers, and occasionally a white servant. Grandparents, parents, children, and grand-children succeeded each other on the same plantation, growing up under intimate communal relationships but in almost complete isolation from the outside world. Thus their whole body of traditions, customs, superstitions, language, religion, and mental background remained in a state of arrested development and were handed down practically unchanged.[5]

175 The Civil War and Freedom made far less difference in their lives than might have been expected. During the strenuous Reconstruction period their dependence and isolation, if anything, increased. The financial and social system of the South was broken up; the white planters and their families were impoverished, and many moved to town or city or even emigrated to the up-country, and the Negroes were left to shift for themselves. There amid the wreckage of great plantations,[6] in the broom-sedge

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[197] [5] Concerning the effects of such continued and unusual isolation within the dialect itself, Mr. Bennett remarks: "There are all grades of negroes, from the rudest field hands to residents of villages and house-servants, who speak with very different degrees of inaccuracy and illiteracy. There are, especially among the islands, plantations so remote from all contact with civilization as once to have developed dialects within the dialect, the characteristic speech and peculiar idioms of one plantation differing so from those of another as to make it very possible for the adept to determine by a negro's peculiarity of dialect what community, sometimes what island, and sometimes almost what plantation was the spokesman's place. Singular peculiarities upon one plantation may be—or once were—totally lacking upon the next holding, though but a few miles distant." I, 336, Note.

[567] [6] How utter was the wreckage and complete the reversal in many cases may be dimly realised from the following contrasted pictures: "Many folks of the old regime were destroyed by the war—not merely soldiers on the battlefield, but civilians white and black, driven or lured from shelter, sustenance, and sanitation. Slaves died by uncounted thousands, and many of their masters were utterly broken. The

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175 fields, the lonely rice marshes, the windy pine-woods, the dying rice-fields, on the little truck-farms and cotton patches of the lowlands, they remained eking out an existence as best they could, almost as untouched by civilization as if they had still been dwelling in the forests of equatorial Africa.

181 Thus with the passing years, owing both to origin and environment, they have come to constitute a highly specialized group among the Negro population of the South. In common with other Negroes they share in the main Negro characteristics, but in them these characteristics are sharply heightened and accentuated. They are almost unbelievably primitive, childlike, excitedly religious, ignorant, illiterate, humorous, shrewd, shiftless beyond expression, superstitious, unstable, likeable, loyal, full of a homely untutored philosophy, gifted with picturesque speech, humble, kindly, generous, good-natured, and entirely without malice. It hardly need be said that they likewise possess in high degree the universal Negro trait of having two quite separate and distinct sides, one for the white race and one for themselves.' Living close to nature they are

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[567] case of Thomas Hamilton Couper of 'Hopeton' on the Altamaha River is an example. Sir Charles Lyell, recognizing him as a distinguished fellow-naturalist, paid him a long visit in 1846 and made laudatory notes upon the library, the household, and the plantation with its five hundred slaves. Another pen has left an account of his burial in 1866, after his death in poverty and despair:

'The steps of the church were broken down, so we had to walk up a plank to get in; the roof was fallen in, so that the sun streamed down on our heads; while the seats were all cut up and marked with the names of Northern soldiers, who had been quartered there during the war. . . . . The funeral party arrived. The coffin was in a cart drawn by one miserable horse, and was followed by the Couper family on foot, having come this way from the landing, two miles off. From the cart to the grave the coffin was carried by four old family negroes, faithful to the end.' Ulrich B. Phillips, "Plantations With Slave Labor and Free," *American Historical Review*, July, 1925.

'This trait is of critical importance. The Negro is a superlative actor and pantomimist, and lets the white man see and know just what the Negro wishes him to—and no more.

Failure to take this into account leads to strange conclusions. It is the reason why so many visiting observers, even though earnest and sincere, have received and recorded impressions of the Negro in the South that are highly plausible—and more highly erroneous.

[113] For a shrewd and cynical summing-up of the case, see L. M. Hussey's "Homo Africanus", *The American Mercury*, Jan., 1925. See also Howard W. Odum and Guy B. Johnson, *The Negro and His Songs*, University of North Carolina Press, 1925, pp. 6 and 9.

Following are three well-balanced expressions on this point, two looking to the

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114 neither Daddy Jack's personality nor dialect ever approxi-
mated the appeal and charm of Uncle Remus. Of this
538 dialect Harris remarks in his Introduction: "It is the
(197) negro dialect in its most primitive state—the 'Gullah' talk
of some of the negroes on the Sea Islands, being merely
a confused and untranslatable mixture of English and
African words."

The most notable early success in Gullah was won by
Charles Colcock Jones, Jr., of Georgia, in *Negro Myths*
from the Georgia Coast, 1888. Colonel Jones, a careful
(197) lawyer, handled the dialect correctly, and recorded with
great exactness and without embellishment the stories as
they were told him on the plantation."[8] His collection, like
that of Mrs. Christensen, contains the earlier analogs of
many of the Uncle Remus stories.

538 How directly and immediately these Georgia and South
Carolina coast tales are derived from African originals
171 may be gathered from Mrs. Christensen's description of
her collection as "comprised of verbatim reports from
178 numerous sable story-tellers of the Sea-Islands, some of
whose ancestors, two generations back, brought parts of
the legends from African forests."[9]

114 During the decades following the work of Harris, Page,
538 Jones, and Mrs. Christensen, the short-story of local color
and the regional genre sketch became widely prevalent,

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(171) (178) [8] Mr. Gonzales authoritatively says of his work: "One familiar with Negro speech recognizes that these tales are recorded as they fell from Negro lips, and as such they must be regarded, as far as they go, as the most authentic record of Negro myths on the continent—probably the originals of many of the 'Uncle Remus' stories, for the slaves first came from Africa to the coast, bringing with them their myths and legends which gradually infiltrated into the hinterland." *The Black Border*, Foreword, p. 16.

(569) [9] See her Preface, XII, XIII. Her informant gives the following account of the source of his stories, (which will likewise serve as a sample of Mrs. Christensen's Gullah dialect): "But I was gwine to tell you 'bout my ol' gran'daddy. I ofting yeardy him tell how 'e was bring ober from Arfrica in a ship when 'e was a boy. De white man lef' de ship behin' and gone asho' in a small boat; an' when dey meet up wid my gran'daddy an' a whole parcel more, young boys like, all from de same village, dey hire dem wid piece ob red flannel an' ting for go long wid dem. But when dey git dem on bo'd de ship dey bring dem ober to dis country an' sell dem for slave. Dey bring my gran'daddy to Charleston an' ol' Marse Heywood buy um. When I was a small leetle boy 'e been berry ol', too ol' for work, an' I use for hab it for my tarsk for min' um. So 'e tell me heap o' dese story, ef I only could 'member um, dat 'e use to yeardy way ober in Arfrica." Pages 4, 5.

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19 fied form of English," both in phonology, grammar, and vocabulary, with elision of difficult sounds, shortening of words, modification of every difficult enunciation, and a minimum of forms for person, number, case, and tense.

Thus, simple to begin with and uniformly responsive to all possible leveling influences, Gullah is as nearly an uninflected tongue as it is possible to conceive.

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[9] George Philip Krapp in "The English of the Negro" (*American Mercury*, June, 1926) gives the following conjectural picture of its origins: "The assimilation of the language of the Negroes to the language of the whites did not take place all at once. Though the historical evidence is not as full as might be wished, the stages can be followed with some certainty. When the Negroes were first brought to America they could have known no English. Their usefulness as servants, however, required that some means of communication between master and slave should be developed. There is little likelihood that any masters exerted themselves to understand or to acquire the native language of the Negroes in order to communicate with them. On the contrary, from the very beginning the white overlords addressed themselves in English to their black vassals. It is not difficult to imagine the kind of English this would be. It would be a very much simplified English—the kind of English some people employ when they talk to babies. It would probably have no tenses of the verb, no distinctions of case in nouns or pronouns, no marks of singular or plural. Difficult sounds would be eliminated, as they are in baby talk. Its vocabulary would be reduced to the lowest possible elements. In short, it would be a language of very much the same kind as those which have developed elsewhere under similar circumstances. It would have resemblances to the Beach-la-Mar of the Western Pacific, the Pidgin English of China, and the Chinook jargon of western America. As the Negroes imported into America came from many unrelated tribes, speaking languages so different that one tribe could not understand the language of another, they themselves were driven to the use of this infantile English in speaking to one another."

See also a similar account by James Weldon Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*, The Viking Press, 1925, pp. 42, 43.

The actual historical picture is thus sketched by Mr. Bennett: "At the time of the arrival of these negroes in the American provinces a considerable proportion of the population was composed of white bondsmen, indentured mechanics and 'redemptioners', the laborers of the colony, among whom the newly-arrived negroes learned their English. Their vocabularies were small and very markedly dialectal, in the majority of instances a dialect which had been handed down from father to son for several generations, preserving closely the peculiarities of earlier times, in many cases Elizabethan and Jacobean.

"The Africans, plastic as they are by nature, quickly lost their own language, and acquired imperfectly the dialects of the British peasantry among whom they worked, and by whom very generally they were directed. The main reason was, perhaps, that, at the height of the trade, owing to the danger of conspiracy, large groups of negroes upon great plantations and in any considerable establishments, were generally made up, by preference, of negroes of different tribes, speaking languages and dialects unknown to one another. They were mostly young, for youth retains no lasting memories and acquires a new language with greater ease.

"The new negroes were parcelled out among the early bond-servants, and, later, among the trained servants, preventing their congregating in a body, hastening their familiarity with their new duties, and more quickly learning the language of their monitors and wardens. This plan was operative from very early days in obliterating the many African dialects and tongues native to the Negro slaves." Personal letter to Professor Yates Snowden, of the University of South Carolina, Jan. 23, 1918.

533 ally well equipped to deal authoritatively with Negro spirituals."[*]

It is interesting to note that he traces the musical form of the spirituals directly back to African sources. "It is true," he says, "that in a great many instances one may meet with spirituals which actually are arrangements of strains of Hymn tunes, and especially so is this the case with present-day religious productions of the Negro; but it is also true that although there are evidences of the effect of the environment of the American Negro, yet these evidences are overbalanced by others which go to prove the African origin of these Negro Spirituals. . . .

"No one who has been in Africa and has heard the music of the Africans would doubt the sincerity of the statement that the characteristics of the music of the American Negro could be traced to an African stem."[*]

This seems an accurate statement of the case. It is much
[567] nearer the facts than the oft-quoted opinion of Booker T.
[114] Washington, that the spirituals are products of slavery.[*]
They are products of slavery in the same sense though
533 not in the same degree that they are products of Chris-
567 tianity. That is, both Christianity and slavery had a share
114 in their make-up and undoubtedly were factors, but the
178 real basis and structure are African. The part slavery
177 played was to add intensity and poignancy to the native
racial pathos and yearning, while Christianity furnished
a remarkably appropriate and vivid background of concrete imagery, concepts, characters, and ideas."[*] But back

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[*] "Dr. Frank Damrosch wrote of him: "He is undoubtedly doing fine work in arousing an interest in African music. He is, so far as I know, the only one who is competent to do this work." *St. Helena Island Spirituals*, Intro., IV.

[*] *Ibid.*, Foreword, VI. Compare James Weldon Johnson's somewhat parallel view, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*, Preface, 23-27, and H. E. Krehbiel, *Afro-American Folksongs*, G. Schirmer, 1914.

[*] "They glow with the hope that the children of bondage will ultimately pass out of the wilderness of slavery into the land of freedom. In singing of a deliverance which they believed would surely come, with bodies swaying with the enthusiasm born of a common experience and of a common hope, they lost sight for a moment of the auction block, of the separation of mother and child, of sister and brother. . . . ." S. Coleridge-Taylor, *Transcriptions of Negro Melodies*, Preface.

[*] For an excellent expression on this point see Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*, Preface, 20, 21. The whole preface is well worth reading. In it, however, and in the Preface to *The Second Book of American Spirituals* as well, there are occasional lapses from either fact or interpretation into stone-throwing.
[529] This, for example, from the latter volume, pages 14, 16, in connection with the

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533 of both Christianity and slavery lie first, the native racial
567 characteristics which were the really creative factors in
the spirituals; and second, the particular environment
114 which alone of all possible localities has called them into
178 being." This combination created them; Christianity
177 shaped and molded them; slavery lent fervor.

As to their sadness, long after the War and Emancipa-
533 tion even to the present day, the same yearning note has
persisted in Negro music. As two scholarly authorities
152 have well put it: "Slavery has passed, six decades of lib-
178 erty for the slave people have signalized the better civili-
zation, and there still remains among the Negroes the
567 same emotional nature, the same sad, plaintive, beautiful,
rhythmic, sorrow-feeling in their songs."" On internal
evidence it is impossible to date the spirituals. Those of
1880-1900 sound like those of 1840-1860.

Likewise in the prolific "Blues"" and the many songs
533 of jail, chain-gang, prison, and lonesomeness," which are
152 distinctly modern in composition, there is the same sad
appealing note, with much self-pity. There is also, be
(522) it said in passing, a good deal of humor, which is the com-
plement, not the opposite, of pathos.

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(527) carcity of spirituals based on the birth or infancy of Christ: "The reason may e due in part to the fact that the anniversary of the birth of Christ was not, in he South, in any sense a sacred or religious holiday. Up to within recent years, at least, it has been celebrated chiefly with gunpowder and whiskey. It has there been the most secular, even the most profane of all holidays. In slavery times it was the one day on which the slaves were given a sort of freedom. The liberty of coming and going was greatly enlarged. On many plantations whiskey was distributed. The day was one given over to a good time; to singing, dancing and visiting; to guzzling, gluttony and debauchery. It is possible that it was a conscious part of the scheme of slavery to make Christmas a day on which the slaves through sheer excess of sensuous pleasure would forget their bonds."

With the exception of a few statements here and there, like the following, the importance of environment has usually been overlooked: "If there is anything 'racial' about the spirituals and the blues, then there should be immediate ability to catch the intricate rhythm on the part of Negroes from Jamaica, Zanzibar, and Sierra Leone. Such is not the case, and we must conclude that they are the products of a certain American environment: The South. They are American folk-songs, built around (113) Anglo-Saxon religious concepts." George E. Schuyler, "Correspondence," *The Nation*, July 14, 1926, p. 36.

Odum and Johnson, *The Negro and His Songs*, p. 19.

(113) See the chapters on "Blues" and "Songs of Jail, Chain Gang, and Policemen" in Odum and Johnson, *Negro Workaday Songs*, the chapter on "Blues" in Dorothy Scarborough, *On the Trail of Negro Folk-Songs*, and W. C. Handy, *Blues, An Anthology*, A. and C. Boni, N. Y., 1926.

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181 829 and that it was safer to let them lie. If you talked about them you might be stirring up trouble for yourself. In Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* the grandparents came to life when memory recalled them; it may be that the West Africans entertain something of the same belief.

181 567 Only by fitting together apparently unrelated parts have I been able to advance a reasonable explanation for our ignorance of the Negro's history and of his private life. He has been in America nearly as long as the white man, yet how much do we know about him? Precious little. We learn of his migrations by inference. Where the pioneering white man went—first South, then West—there went the Negro slave to break the ground.[3] He is mentioned—that is all. From accounts given by travelers in Africa, it is evident that they find out no more about the home life of the native than the interpreters choose to have them know, and in America this same reserve is as persistent a characteristic as is the color of the race or its frizzy hair. Southern planters grow up with certain trusted Negroes, without dreaming
[535] that they may be skilled in some particular direction. It was interesting to watch the face of one of them, Uncle Scotia, when he saw the Buzzard Lope—for the first time in his life—done by a Negro woman he had known for more than fifty years. If he had heard about the dance and inquired—as I did—"Can you do it?" she would undoubtedly long before have obliged him. I must reiterate that the importance of knowing what questions to ask cannot be overestimated.

How much of the hands-off policy of the early plantation owners was due to their own lack of initiative, and how much to the silent pressure which the black race knows so well how to employ, had best be left an open question. Southerners say that a college education is of no avail when pitted against the cleverness of the Negro; and I know of too many instances in which the colored man has outwitted
181 177 567 the white, to doubt that assertion.[4] But whoever originated segregation [5] and the regime described in 1829 by Captain Basil Hall in his *Travels in the United States*, the Negroes' passion for secrecy was fostered. Captain Hall quotes the owner of a rice plantation on the Combahee River as saying: "We don't care what they do when their tasks are over—we lose sight of them till next day. Their morals and

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[3] *In considering the distribution of the slave songs this historical fact must be kept in mind. The Negro carried his songs with him, and I am convinced that they did not return against the tide of migration to any great extent.*

[538]
[4] *Just as in the Uncle Remus tales, Brer Rabbit always outwits Brer Fox.*

[5] Mary H. Kingsley, in West African Studies, tells us that among the Bantus the slaves live in villages apart from their masters.

181 their manners are in their own keeping. The men may have, for instance, as many
177 wives as they please, so long as they do not quarrel about such matters." And, I
•567 notice, Southerners on our coast still tacitly observe this tradition.

When I began the work of actively retrieving slave songs, and instituted "sings"
123 at the Cabin in front of my cottage, I found it expedient to follow the same pro-
533 cedure. The group—silently, be it remembered—made it clear that such matters as
181 jail sentences and surplus wives were their affair, whereas my concern was limited
to their music, although anything—such as drinking, "soldiering," or insubordination—which interfered with its proper presentation was distinctly within my province.

As a concrete example of the lengths to which the Negro carries his reluctance to give information, I can do no better than tell how Julia taught me a valuable lesson: never take anything for granted. After being my laundress for three winters, she became my cook in 1915, and for the fifteen years in all she enjoyed a precious secret. With her as intermediary I was able to hear the slave songs. She never sang a note on my place, and I assumed that she could not. But in 1927, at Mrs. Arnold's funeral, her dramatic moment arrived. With the group she had brought to my door, she stood beside the open grave, and she sang as well as the others. When I periodically ask why, in all those years, she never told me she could sing, she smiles quizzically, but says nothing. Perhaps she does not know herself.

However, it is just possible that an age-old compensation complex explains the
181 situation. I am convinced that the average Negro enjoys intensely knowing some-
177 thing that the white man does not, and the exquisite delight he derives from realiz-
ing that the white man has been bested in a little game makes up for any loss or
(123) indignity he may be obliged to endure. Julia's game was innocent and her loss was
financial, but that such tactics may have a less pleasant side—aimed at the eventual discomfiture of an exacting employer—it may be well to remember.

Before leaving the subject of the Negro's secretiveness, it may be well to con-
181 sider this racial characteristic in relation to another that is quite as often mentioned
177 by travelers in Africa: dread of derision.[6] It seems to me that the attitude of the
152 whites toward the blacks has never been calculated to encourage the latter to parade
186 their Africanisms. The slave trader's need of justification, and our ignorance of
Africa and its culture, enabled him to persuade us that Africans were barbarians in

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[6] *Fear of ridicule enables African blackmailers with a gift of clever improvization to collect tribute from their thin-skinned brothers—for the songs they do not sing.*

181 aloof, and never lose a chance to mislead and to poke fun at the white man behind
his back. But I have noticed that they often reflect the treatment meted out to
000 them in slave days. Geoffrey Gorer, in *Africa Dances*, calls attention to this fact:
"If you can watch a man dealing with negroes you have no need to ask his opinion
about them; and if you can watch a man's negroes you will know the chief points
of his character. They mirror their masters faithfully and terribly." This approach
has always interested me, and I have traced the ancestry and former ownership of
181 many of our Glynn County Negroes. Cusie[9] Sullivan provided me with a striking
exemplification of Gorer's statement. His good manners excited my curiosity, and
567 when I encountered his father, Ben, at a Negro funeral, they were explained. Mrs.
195 Shadman, who had known Cusie's grandfather, Bilali, gave me his history. He was
the butler at the Couper plantations, at Cannon's Point on St. Simon's, and at
Hopeton on the Altamaha River. The courtesy of the three generations of Sullivans
known to Mrs. Shadman is a tribute to the genuine distinction of the Couper
family.[10]

However, the self-respecting dignity[11] of this group of Negroes undoubtedly had its roots in Africa. Sir Charles Lyell devotes considerable space to a description of life on Hopeton plantation and to "African Tom."[12] Lyell tells us: "Under the white overseer, the principal charge . . . is given to 'Old Tom,' the head driver, a man of superior intelligence and higher cast of feature. He was the son of a prince of the Foulah tribe [West Soudan], and was taken prisoner, at the age of fourteen, near Timbuctoo. The accounts he gave of what he remembered of the plants and geography of Africa have been taken down in writing by Mr. Couper, and confirm many of the narratives of modern travelers. He has remained a strict Mahometan, but his numerous progeny of jet-black children and grandchildren, all of them

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[9] *In* West African Studies, *Miss Kingsley says that among the Fanti Negroes a boy born on Sunday is called Quisi.*

[10] *By the same token, one of my most helpful singers—Ben Davis—who was trained from early childhood by Mrs. Shadman, mirrors the thoughtful dependability of her character.*

[11] *Egerton, in* African Majesty, *makes it very clear that he was impressed with the great dignity and presence of the uncle of the King of Bangangté in the French Cameroons. The many wives of the King also excited his admiration: "They were dignified, self-possessed and definitely regal."*

[12] *Professor James A. Grant of Darien, tells me that his great-grandfather, Thomas (called C ncastone among his own people), was a driver on the Couper plantations. In his youth he had heard his grandfather, Thomas (brother of the Couper's Bilali), say that he was named for his father who was an African prince and a Mohammedan. Apparently "African Tom" and Bilali's father, Thomas, were one and the same.*

181 marked by countenances of a more European cast than those of ordinary negroes,
567 have exchanged the Koran for the Bible. . . . During the last war [1812] when Ad-
175 miral Cockburn was off this coast with his fleet, he made an offer of freedom to all the slaves belonging to the father [John Couper] of my present host, and a safe convoy to Canada.[13] Nearly all would have gone, had not African Tom, to whom they looked up with great respect, declined the proposal. He told them he had first known what slavery was in the West Indies, and had made up his mind that the English were worse masters than the Americans. About half of them, therefore, determined to stay on St. Simon's Island, and not a few of the others who accepted the offer and emigrated had their lives shortened by the severity of the climate in Canada."

Z. Kingsley, in his *Treatise on the Patriarchal Form of Society*, published some time before 1829, cites "two instances to the southward [of Charleston], where gangs of negroes were prevented from deserting to the enemy by drivers . . . and what is still more remarkable, in both instances the influential negroes were Africans, and professors of the Mohammedan religion." It is clear that Kingsley had
(212) John Couper's "Old Tom" in mind, and that the other Mohammedan was Spalding's Bilali,[14] whose so-called *Diary*, written in Arabic, on Sapelo Island, is now in the possession of the Georgia State Library in Atlanta. Pages from the *Diary* have been incorporated in the end-paper designs of this book.

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567 This manuscript has aroused keen interest among anthropologists, and the photostatic copy I sent to Melville J. Herskovits has been translated by Joseph Greenberg.[15] During the summer of 1939 Mr. Greenberg visited Northern Nigeria, under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council, and through his fluent knowledge of Arabic won the confidence of educated Malams in the city of Kano. They assisted him in deciphering certain parts of the "diary" and in locating the places in an important Mohammedan legal work[16] from which most of the manuscript derives. It is amusing that the first result of Mr. Greenberg's study was to

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[13] *Admiral Cockburn harried our coast during the War of 1812, and as late as January, 1815, destroyed the orange orchards on Cumberland Island.*

[14] *Charles S. Wylly, in* Seed Sown in Georgia, *tells us how, in 1813, his grandfather, Thomas Spalding, relied upon Bilali to aid in the protection of his property on Sapelo with its "five hundred slaves, many fresh from . . . Africa."*

[15] *A résumé of the results of his work has been published in the* Journal of Negro History, *July, 1940.*

[16] *The* Risala *of 'abu Muhammad 'abdullah b. 'abi Zaid 'alquairawani.*

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212 show that the "diary" was in reality not a record of Old Bilali's life. Disappointing
567 as this discovery may be to those who are primarily interested in his history, it is still
possible, according to Mr. Greenberg, to draw certain conclusions about him from
the character of the manuscript.

He was apparently a fanatical Mohammedan, for the "diary" consists mainly of descriptions of "ablutions and the call to prayer." Mistakes in the Arabic script,[17] along with "repetitions, incorrect word divisions, and incorrect arrangement of the excerpts," indicate that he was trying to reproduce what he had learned orally. Since "books are first taught by oral memorization," Mr. Greenberg conjectures that "at the time of his departure from Africa the writer was still a young student."

175 It was reassuring to find that Mr. Greenberg's deductions tallied with what
Katie Brown, Bilali's great-granddaughter, had told me about him years before.
567 According to her, he was captured when not fully grown, and went to Sapelo from
Nassau with his wife and children. Where he spent the intervening years no one
knows. Both Katie and her cousin, Shadrach Hall, tell me that the three oldest chil-
dren were named Margaret, Hester, and Charlotte (Cotty). The others bore Afri-
[55 can names: [18] Fatima (Shad says she was named for her mother), Nyrrabuh or
(171)

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[17] Concerning the possibility "of discovering the origin and status of the writer" through the character of the script he used, Mr. Greenberg says: "The fact that the Arabic script was of the Maghrebine. or Western variety, and that the Risala is a legal work of the Malekite school, which is dominant in appproximtely the same regions as the Western style of writing, would seem to indicate that the writer came from some part of northwest Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunis) or from the Western Sudan. The confusion of 'd' and 'l' in several cases points strongly to the Sudan, since this pronunciation is unknown elsewhere. It is doubtful whether local varieties of the Maghrebine script in the Sudan can be distinguished at the present state of our knowledge; at any rate, no attempt has hitherto been made to do this, and therefore, this approach would seem to be closed to us pending further research."

In Notes on Northern Africa, the Sahara and Soudan, by W. B. Hodgson, the birthplace of Bul-ali is established in a letter from James Hamilton Couper of Hopeton plantation, Georgia. This letter is given in full, and states that his "driver Tom" and Mr. Spalding's Bul-ali were intimate friends. Both spoke the Foulah language. and were from the Kingdom of Bambara. Tom was born on the Niger River in Kianah, between Jenne and Timbuctoo, but Bul-ali was from Timboo.

[18] Lyell mentions the singular taste diplayed by Negro parents in naming their children: January, April. Monday, and Hard Times. He did not know what Dr. Turner has discovered: the slaves followed a West African custom in naming their children according to the time of birth, conditions surrounding it, or the temperament of the child. Bad Boy, Peanut, Blossom, and July are names found on the Georgia coast. In West African Studies Miss Kingsley tells us that soon after a child is born it is given "the name by which it is to be called. A second name which the child usually takes is that of the day of the week on which it is born."

175 567 [553] [174] (191) Yarrabuh, Medina, and Binty (probably Bintu), the youngest, who was the only one of the family group who could not speak French. The others spoke English, French, and their native tongue. Why was it that Binty spoke only two languages? This fact raises still another interesting question.

175 567 252 Katie's grandmother was Margaret and Shad's was Hester. Both were apparently Mohammedans, since Katie and Shad remember fragments of their prayers and, in particular, the rice balls which the half-famished children were given when the sun went down on a certain fast day. They were vague about the time of year, but both gave me the identical recipe for making this ceremonial food. Katie said they got a peck of white rice from Darien and soaked it overnight. In the morning surplus water was drained off and the rice was put into the well-washed mortar. All the larger children were set to beating it. When it was fine, enough white sugar was added to make it taste like white loaf-sugar candy. Unlike a similar West African rice ball,[19] this type was not cooked. Shad said the pieces were made into dumplings, and that his grandmother used syrup if she could not get sugar. But Katie particularized and said the paste was rolled into balls "the size of small fowls' eggs" which were then put on a fanner and set aside to harden. When the children lined up to receive the rice balls, which were called "sarika,"[20] the grandmother's eye was on the lookout for grimy hands. Any child whose hands were not perfectly clean had to leave and do a good job while the others waited. As she handed the sarika to a child she would say either "Sarika dee" or "Ah-me, Ah-me."

175 567 782 Portions of the prayer used by Bilali and his wife as they "got down flat," when it came time to pray, were remembered by both descendants. The two Mohammedans would hold a long string of beads. As Bilali moved a bead along he would say "Karo baro." Fatima would say: "Ah-me, Ah-me." When he moved the next bead he would say: "Saka baro" and again she would say: "Ah-me, Ah-me." Shad says he remembers hearing that Bilali ended his prayers with "Mohammedoo." According to Charles S. Wylly, in *Seed Sown in Georgia*, his grandfather, Thomas Spalding,

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[551] [191] *She gives the names of the days in the Fanti language, and it is interesting to find that a boy born on Monday is called Kujot—probably Cudjo—and on Tuesday, Quabina, which was the name of a faithful slave at Retreat Plantation. Friday's child was called Kufi, and it is now easy to see where Kuffie Jones got his name.*

[19] *Described by M. J. Field, in Gold Coast Food* (The College Press, Pamphlet No. 3).

[20] *Dr. Turner attributes the name sarika to the Bambara tribe, which inhabits the greater part of the French Sudan. This tribe is said by Geoffrey Gorer to be fanatically Mohammedan, and reared in a warlike tradition.*

175 had slaves of "Moorish or Arabian descent, devout Mussulmans, who prayed to
567 Allah . . . morning, noon, and evening." Wylly adds in a footnote that three times
[782] each day Bilali faced East and called upon Allah.[21] When he died his Koran and praying sheepskin were buried with him.

Other details concerning Bilali are given by Georgia Bryan Conrad in her "Reminiscences" which appeared in the *Southern Workman* in 1901. She tells us that "On Sapelo Island, near Darien, I used to know a family of Negroes who worshipped Mahomet. They were all tall and well-formed, with good features. They conversed with us in English, but in talking among themselves they used a foreign tongue that no one else understood. The head of the tribe was a very old man called Bi-la-li. He always wore a cap that resembled a Turkish fez. These Negroes held themselves aloof from the others as if they were conscious of their own superiority."[22]

124 Bilali's descendants on Sapelo have given me much interesting data on old notions which probably came out of Africa. To avoid collusion I never question two Negroes together, and always check the material given by one with that from others.
822 Several Sapelo Negroes have told me that red was such a popular color with the
175 Africans that many were captured by slave-ship captains hanging red cloth on the
567 deck of a ship. When the Negroes unsuspectingly came aboard, they took a long

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[21] Thomas Astley in Vol. II, of his Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1745, gives extracts from the writings of various African explorers. Their observations on the Mohammedans of the Senegal and Gambia region throw some light on the religious customs of the Mohammedans on Sapelo. One said: "the natives along the Gambia worship the one true and only God, whom they call Allah." Another remarked that "Mohammedanism found among these people is very lame. . . . It consists in . . . two or three ceremonies as the Ramadhan, or Lent, The Bayram, or Easter, and the practice of circumcision." Francis Moor made explorations in the same section in 1730 and Astley quotes him as saying: "they [the Fuli] are much like the Arabs, whose language is taught in their schools . . . they are generally more skilled in the Arabic than the Europeans in the Latin; for most of them speak it, though they have a vulgar tongue of their own, called Fuli. . . . Their humanity extends to all, but they are doubly kind to their own race . . . support the old, the blind and the lame. . . . They are rarely angry and the author could never hear them abuse one another. . . . They are always very clean. . . . They are strict Mohammedans and only a few drink brandy." Another explorer specified the time at which the Mohammedan Negroes said their prayers: "at Day-break, Noon, and at Sun-set." Sieur Brüe reported that "they keep standing a considerable time, looking . . . towards the Sun-rising; then they advance two paces, muttering something between their teeth: Then they lie flat on their faces: next rising on their knees . . . and afterwards they kiss the earth, several times."

[22] It is estimated that Mrs. Conrad saw the Sapelo Bilali shortly before 1860.

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175 voyage from which they never returned.[23] Ten years ago Katie told me that the
●567 Sapelo Negroes never swept dirt out the door at night if they could help it. If they
(822) did or were obliged to throw out water, it was important to say, "Move on, fr'en,"
(354) or " 'Scuse me, brother." Otherwise they were in danger of offending some of their
(775) kinfolk who might be passing by or "visitin' aroun'." On St. Simon's I was told if it
(782) were necessary to sweep at night you must first throw out a live coal, to make sure
you did not sweep away the spirit of some member of the family.

754 On Sapelo if a hag torments you at night you put a knife, or a Bible, under
789 your pillow. Glasgow says that a man he knows would cry out in his sleep and could
get no peace until he tried this remedy.[24] Katie told me that when you had occasion
775 to speak of the dead, you made the sign of the cross on your forehead. At a funeral
788 on St. Simon's an old woman went to the fireplace and, with a sooty finger, made
789 the same sign on the forehead of a little child. The next day, when asked why she
did this, she explained that it was to keep the spirit of the dead man from troubling
the youngster.[25] Katie also told me that passing the child over the coffin to someone
on the other side afforded the same immunity.

I have never been convinced that the reason given by our Negroes for holding
175 funerals at night was unimpeachably true. The answer I usually get, when I question
567 them, reflects on the generosity of the slave owner. It seems unlikely that any master
764 as kindhearted as the one described by Susan Dabney Smedes, in *A Southern
Planter*, would begrudge the time it took from the daily "tas' " for the funeral of a
beloved slave. Night funerals were apparently an established custom in Virginia in
1835, the time the Dabneys left for Mississippi. Mrs. Smedes tells us that she remembers the death of Grannie Harriett, born in tide-water Virginia long before

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[23] *M. Andanson is quoted in* Astley's Collection *as saying that the "Bristol and Liverpool ships were the worst offenders." It is also reported by Miss Kingsley, in* West African Travels, *that red was a favorite color of the spirits ("spirits always like red") and the most frequent charm-case was of that color "to flatter and please" them.*

[24] *Miss Beckwith mentions the same inclination to ascribe supernatural powers to objects used in Christian religion: "hence a [Revivalist] preacher always held a Bible, although he might hold it upside down." On the coast of Georgia this custom is the rule, but it is from an unwillingness to admit illiteracy and to depart from a convention. But Miss Beckwith tells of other superstitions that are surprisingly similar to those found on our sea islands. They were in all likelihood carried to Jamaica by the slaves of the loyalists who settled there following the Revolutionary War.*

(177) [25] *A curious instance of Catholic influence on an African superstition. Lampblack was used to darken coffins in the old days, and a finger rubbed on the coffin was as effective as one dabbed in soot.*

175 her master, Thomas Dabney, who was born in 1798. Grannie had been given to him
● 567 by his mother with the words: "You can trust her in everything." When he went
764 to Mississippi she went along with his other slaves, but apparently the journey was
too hard, and Grannie died soon after their arrival. "The master himself led the
funeral procession, and all his children followed the coffin as mourners. He ordered
out the whole plantation, every one who could walk, and every man, woman, and
child carried a torch. The sound of the funeral hymn and the blazing of the many
torches, as we wound down the road to the dark shades of the burying-ground,
made a painful impression on me as a child and caused many a secret tear." In her
Journal Fanny Kemble describes another night funeral on Butler's Island, to which
she reacted in a similar manner—except that she did not shed her tears in private.

In describing an African burial, Mungo Park mentions that the body is dressed
764 in white cotton, wrapped in a mat, and then "carried to the grave in the dusk of
171 the evening, by the relations." From this I am led to believe that the custom may
have originated in Africa. Further evidence to support such a view is furnished by
Monroe M. Work, who says, in an article in the *Southern Workman* (1907), that
it was an old Hamarian practice to bury the dead in the dark. It may be that our
764 Negroes carried out some such traditional observance when they threw their pine
torches beside the grave and went back without them. We know the belief in spirits
(775) is strong, and it is possible that in this way the spirit of the dead man was prevented
from following the living to their homes. Be that as it may, the pine torches were
never removed, and the nearest I have come to an explanation of why they were left
was given me by Katie Brown: They belonged to the dead. You must not take away
(784) a thing that is theirs. If, at the burial, a button falls to the ground from your dress,
(777) you must not pick it up. Bad luck follows you if you do.[28]

A nephew of Katie's gave me an instance of what happened to a Sapelo colored
764 man he knows, who helped clean up the graveyard. After he had put the brush in
776 piles to burn, he thriftily changed his mind and brought in his ox and cart to carry
775 it away. Instead, he had to back his "team" into the fence and leave in a hurry when
attacked by an immense dog—as big as a yearling calf—that had never before been

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[28] *If you start to do something for the dead—whatever it is—you must carry it through. Laura*
(775) *never reached the grave of her son with the flowers she had apparently gathered for it, and in
a few months she died in an asylum. The headstone carved out of the marble top of a wash-
stand by young Aaron for his father's grave is still in the Cabin. He has been in serious trouble
ever since he left it there.*

787 to die. But in this instance it was her family, not mine. She had eleven children—
763 now there are only ten. Julia told me later that within a few days of her son's death
two lamp chimneys in her house had broken without being touched, and a saucer
had broken in half in her hand, one half falling to the floor.

When a letter from Dauphin Plantation, Haiti, reported gloom in the laundry,
754 all because three little stones had been left on the window sill of the cabin of
Diana, the black washerwoman, I made inquiries and found that those innocent-appearing pebbles meant something quite as ominous to our Negroes as to Diana.
When I asked a couple of colored women if they would mind if such stones had
been left on a window ledge of theirs, they made it distinctly clear that they would.
To get the better of such an ugly situation, one told me, she would take a piece of
tin or shingle, push the stones onto it with a stick, and throw them far away. The
other particularized and said you mustn't face the stones, you must approach from
the side and shove them from that angle—and it was much safer to throw them into
the fire.

789 I first learned about the dime worn on a string around the ankle—to ward off
bad luck—at a little Negro church. The preacher was railing at his congregation for
believing in charms: "Right now, I know a lot of you have dimes strung 'round your
ankles." Since then I have been on the lookout. Sure enough, they are there. Ac-
(171) cording to Mungo Park, similarly worn charms, or amulets, are common in all parts
of Africa.

Kingsley says in his *Treatise* that he purchased Gullah Jack—who was a con-
567 jurer in his own country—a prisoner of war, at Zinguebar. "He had his conjuring
754 implements with him in a bag which he brought on board the ship, and always re-
197 tained them." For the benefit of those who are interested in knowing where "Gullah
Jack" was born and to eliminate the idea that he belonged to the Gola tribe living
in Liberia, east of the City of Monrovia, I wish to quote Kingsley's statement that
Gullah Jack's "own country" was M'Choolay Moreema, where a dialect of the
Angola tongue is spoken clear across Africa from sea to sea, a distance perhaps of
three thousand miles. These words should establish the origin of the Gullah dialect,
but if you have always believed that "Gullah" derives from the Golas of Liberia—
Liberia it will undoubtedly continue to be.

567 Mrs. A. S. Hilsman, who was born on a plantation at Fancy Bluff, tells me
754 there was a witch or goof doctor among her father's Negroes, who had learned his
(551) magic in Africa. After "freedom" he took the surname of Polecat, as he wanted one

567 that was distinctive. He taught his wife Milly (Illustration 34)[A] how to make "goof
754 bags." Apparently his magic was no more potent than Gullah Jack's when it came
(551) to protecting himself. Gullah Jack was executed in Charleston for his part in the
(682) uprising of 1822; and when Jim Polecat was old, decrepit, and a nuisance, his own
(888) children pushed him into the fireplace, and burned him to ashes. Milly must have
159 been a peculiar character. She would turn her back on you when she had anything
342 to say. When her cabin was built she insisted on having no windows—a good Afri-
754 can mode of construction. She said: "Door's enough to watch." When urged to have them for ventilation, she insisted that "Chimney gives enough air." There were no windows put in. The walls of her cabin were lined with boxes and trunks that had belonged to her children, all of whom were dead or in the penitentiary. It is no wonder she was moody, and that the other Negroes were afraid of her. They might well be, for—in addition to being looked upon as a witch—she was the mother of seven murderers.

231 In every Negro settlement there are usually frizzled chickens.[21] These curious-
825 looking birds are supposed to be on the watch for goof bags or any "sleight-o'-hand"
754 buried under doorsteps. Josephine tells me that she always keeps one around for such a purpose. If the chicken "come clean" (loses its feathers), it is a sure proof that it has scratched up something intended for its owner's bad luck. So much for black magic. You hear little about it, but the belief in its efficacy turns up every now and then when least expected.

At the risk of being tiresome, it may be well to call attention to various obscure
793 customs among the Negroes that could easily be passed over as idiosyncrasies. From
751 the pulpit of the Jewtown African Baptist Church I heard Parson Joe Lowman say
796 with a weak voice that he was feelin' very po'ly and in no condition to preach a Christmas sermon, but by the grace of God he would do his best. I was astonished to find, as he warmed to his subject, "The Christ Child and the Three Wise Men," that his voice grew stronger and stronger. When his sermon was finished, I realized that I would never hear a better one, and that he had either received supernatural
000 aid or was a consummate artist—perhaps both. Later, I read an article by Morton C. Kahn, on "Adventures in Medical Research among Two Strange Tribes of Dutch Guiana,"[22] in which the author described the greeting employed by the Bush Negroes, the translation of which runs somewhat as follows: "Howdy, white man.

[21] *Captain R. S. Rattray tells us such freakish birds are called asense chickens in Ashanti.*

[22] "Where Black Man Meets Red." Natural History, May, 1936.

A,[For Illustration 34, see Category 754, plate facing p. 225--Analyst]

763 spot long enough to find out many fascinating things about Africa's black residents,
764 mentions the fact that "In the cold wet months it is inconvenient to have . . . a
171 [funeral] feast, and if some one dies at that time of year, the feast is often postponed until the dry season."

793 Negro preachers—particularly those who possess good voices and a store of
796 spicy proverbs—often deliver sermons and offer prayers that stick in the mind. One I heard in Liberty County (the one whom I thought afflicted) expatiated on the
537 subject of sin. He made it clear that certain types were worse than others. "Sin is a mean thing," and his tone was scornful; but when he said: "Self is a terrible thing!" it was thunderous and convincing. In a barn of a church in Camden County the substance of the preacher's prayer was in these touchingly earnest words: "We're down here, Lord, chewin' on dry bones an' swallerin' bitter pills. We can't do nothin' without You." Whatever may be said about the emotional character of the
771 religion of our American Negro, it must be conceded that his sins are of the flesh
181 rather than the spirit. He is generous with his last crust, and there would be no need of orphanages if white people, in proportion to their means, adopted as many children as colored people.

When it comes to terse economy of speech we are obliged to concede that no
175 one can equal the Negro. Mrs. Annie Arnold, born on St. Simon's in 1844, gave me
567 the perfect example of this fact in recounting a bit of local history. A cargo of slaves
191 of the Ebo tribe had been landed at a suspiciously secluded spot on the west side of the island. They preferred death to a life of captivity, and as they walked into the water the leader said: "The water brought us here. The water will take us away." No one but an African could have expressed such poignant unhappiness in so few
175 words. In view of the fact known to traders that the Ebo men made poor slaves and were prone to suicide,[35] the account is probably true. The Negroes believe the
567 story, and to this day they have to be extremely hungry to fish by themselves at Ebo Landing. One night a few years ago some colored boys braved tradition, and went 'possum hunting in the neighborhood. I have my own ideas as to the real cause of their terrifying experience, but the fact remains that no others have been tempted to repeat it.

Sir Charles Lyell tells us that "The slave trade ceased in 1796, and but few negroes were smuggled into Georgia from foreign countries, except indirectly for

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[35] *For this reason as few as possible were accepted by the traders.*

175 a short time through Florida before its annexation [1819]; yet one fourth of the
●567 population of this lower country is said to have come direct from Africa."[36] A little calculation indicates that he was misinformed either as to smuggling or as to population. I am inclined to believe it was the former, as the last slaves to be smuggled into Glynn County arrived in November, 1858,[37] on the Wanderer, and the last African of that group died in Brunswick only a few years ago.

Because of the illicit slave trade that continued for economic reasons to such a late date on the coast of Georgia, we probably have more African survivals here than are to be found in sections of the Atlantic coast which were settled before the slave traffic was technically abolished. This may account for the similarity between
538 the proverbs of Africa and those in use among our older Negroes. A few illustrations
171 will suffice to establish the relationship: When I asked Joe—so dark that protective coloration serves him in the shade—why it was that I never had any trouble with dark Negroes, while those of a light color were often a different matter, he explained with a wide grin: "High yalla pizens the stream." On another occasion I asked him what to do about a certain singer who persisted in double-crossing his group. His reply probably had its origin in Africa: "My ole gran'mother use t' say: 'Them's the kind you gotta feed with a long spoon.' " In *Suriname Folklore*, Melville and Frances Herskovits quote a proverb found among the Negroes of Dutch Guiana that is very similar: "When you eat with the devil then you must have a long fork." In McIntosh County I heard a Negro preacher tell his congregation that when a man dug a pit for his neighbor, at the same time he dug one for himself. Another Suriname proverb carries the same warning: "When a person digs a hole to put another in he himself falls into it." Once I said to Bessie that it looked as though she had forgotten me. In disclaiming such a charge she quoted "the old people" as saying: "Never forget the bridge that carries you over." A. F. Chamberlin reports a corresponding proverb from the Yoruba of Southern Nigeria, which warns against kicking away the ladder by which one rose. As can be seen, the advantage of using a proverb lies in its indirection. It allows no accusation to be pinned against the speaker, and generally displays a whimsical humor that is more telling than any literal presentation of facts.

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[36] Second Visit to the United States.

[37] *J. A. Tillinghast,* in The Negro in Africa and America, *says that the importation of Negroes from the Guinea coast did not cease until after the Emancipation Proclamation, and quotes Professor W. E. B. DuBois* (The Suppression of the Slave-Trade) *as saying that the Act of 1807, forbidding the trans-Atlantic slave trade,* "came near being a dead letter."

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192 with a neck of wood attached, and fitted with four strings.[45] A Georgian I know called her devoted colored nurse "Dah," which means mother in an African dialect. Many Southerners are familiar with the odd word *swanga* as applied to a proud, boastful Negro. They probably assume, as I did, that it is a corruption of "swagger," but like the word "shout" it is another African word that happens to sound something like one of ours. For the same reason such African names as *Sandi, Suki, Aba, Bina,* and *Beti,* that are quite similar to our diminutives, have passed unnoticed, while such names as *Pinda, Mandigo, Dembo, Sambo, Cudjo, Quash,* and the Arabic names on Sapelo arrest our attention.

192 The survival of African food names such as *gumbo* or okra (famous in New
252 Orleans), *benne*[46] (that figures in Charleston's special candy), goobers or peanuts,
suggests that African cooking methods as well as names survive in Southern kitchens.
191 Much interesting material on this highly controversial subject has been furnished
114 by Herskovits in an article entitled "What Has Africa Given America?"[47] Of all
192 who write about the Negro, I find the conclusions of this well-known anthropologist
191 the most convincing. What he says on the subject of Negro music, on certain "musical" aspects of Southern speech, the survival of African idioms and pronunciation, and the impress on Southern white children of the courtesy instilled into them by their colored nurses ties up with my years of experience with the Negroes.

It may be only a coincidence, but *mpinda* and *nguba* are both Congo names
175 for peanut, and the Cater family, of Kelvin Grove, had a slave called Pinda, who was
●567 the daughter of their faithful Dembo.[48] Dembo's father was an African prince, to
[192] whom a gun was of greater value than a son—probably there was a surplus of the latter and a shortage of the former. At any rate Dembo was sold into slavery for a

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[45] *Cable tells us in "The Dance in Place Congo" that "for the true African dance . . . a sensual, devilish thing tolerated only by Latin-American masters, there was wanted the dark inspiration of African drums and the banjo thrump and strum." Perhaps this accounts for the banjo not being heard in Georgia—with its strictly English background.*

[46] The tradition on St. Simon's is that once you plant benne, you must keep it up. "Old man
[824] *Death'll catch you if you don't." If you are ill, you can at least throw it out the window and*
[961] *give it half a chance to grow.*

[47] New Republic, September 4, 1935.

[48] Dembo was the "driver" who had charge of the other slaves under the white overseer. When the overseer killed his master, Thomas Cater, in the neighborhood of 1805, Dembo saved the life of Thomas' only son, Benjamin, and looked out for his young master's interests so whole-heartedly that he earned the hatred of the other slaves. When he died they buried him on the North Boundary of the plantation as far from their own graveyard as they could place him.

175 567 [159] gun. Mrs. Arnold, who was the daughter of Captain Stevens, of Frederica, told me how her father's slave, Old Grace, had been captured in a "goober patch" in Africa. Old Grace and some members of her tribe had made a stealthy night raid on the stockaded garden of a neighboring village. Although Mrs. Arnold told me the story over twenty-five years ago, I can still see Old Grace trying to climb the fence when she and her companions were discovered.

567 754 159 175 We are supposed to dig our graves with our teeth, and inferentially Grace's appetite for peanuts was her undoing, but no grave was dug for her, if the story of her end is true. Mrs. Stevens always cautioned her children to keep away from Old Grace's cabin, for she boasted that she had eaten pickaninnies in her native land, and "the meat was sweet." She was also reputed to be a hag and many a "marsh tacky"—found in the morning with a matted, tangled mane—was she supposed to have ridden. When the Federal forces—followed by an iniquitous carpet-bagger.[49]—took over St. Simon's, Captain Stevens, although a Dane and a non-combatant, was sent to Fort Delaware, where he died. His widow and children were sent to Savannah. After the war was over, they returned to Frederica and found that Old Grace had disappeared. No one would talk about her, but the story got around that her [683] own people had grown tired of her wicked ways, and had staked her out at low tide in one of the salt-water creeks. If the water rose above her head, that was an act of [171] God, and was no concern of those who did the deed. In Miss Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa*, I have lately found that this mode of drowning was one of the popular methods of disposing of African witches.[50]

178 Besides survivals of language, customs, and beliefs, we have survivals of particular skills. Such useful ones as carrying unwieldy bundles on the head, making canoes and mortars by hollowing out logs, weaving baskets—particularly the flat type used for fanning rice—are a commonplace in the South, and may not on this account

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[49] *His name was Eaton, and he is said to have come from Maine. He purported to be a minister and insisted on remarrying the Negroes at twenty dollars a pair. Although the price was high, they were enabled, through his assistance, to occupy the homes of the refugee planters. Before Mrs. Stevens was out of her house the Negroes came in and made their choice of rooms—generally a family to a room. When the Postells returned to Kelvin Grove Plantation after the war there were ten Negro families in their house. Not a shutter was on it. Every one had been taken down to make corn bins in the basement, and every pane of glass had been shattered by the gun-boats. Can we wonder that the Southerners called us "Damyankees"?*

[50] *Miss Kingsley believed that the black man recognized "in a dull sort of way" that witchcraft meant the same thing as poison. She tells that he very generally regarded "the best remedy for witching as being a brisk purgative and emetic."*

178 be recognized as African. However, the æsthetic taste of the race, which expressed
itself in Africa in ceremonial dances, in song, and in carvings, had less opportunity
for expression in the utilitarian lives led by the slaves.

461 Olmstead reports that "it is interesting to find in what ways the creative in-
stinct continued to manifest itself," and goes on to quote a prominent Virginia
planter as saying that his Negroes "never worked so hard as to tire themselves—al-
[191] ways were lively and ready for a frolic at night." As in Africa, every possible piece of
work was done to song; and it probably did not take the slave-owners long to dis-
[533] cover that the output was greater when leaders with a gift for rhythm were ap-
pointed to regulate the work of gangs of laborers. Nor is it surprising that the slaves
326 were expert blacksmiths, when it is remembered that Africa since time immemorial
191 has worked in iron. Her deposits were so rich and so near the surface that compar-
atively simple methods were required to make the ore available. On this account
certain tribes have always been skilled in iron-work, and the reason for the excellence
of the famous grilles, balconies, and railings made by the slaves of New Orleans is
obvious.

George D. Lowe, editor of the Baxley Banner, tells of a Georgia slave who
567 could take a blackgum log and cut from it a perfect screw for the old-type cotton
322 press, and also cut the opposite thread for the follower block—all this without laying
out a line on the log, just using his eye. Mr. Lowe says: "There was another Negro
567 slave owned in Twiggs county who was a famous stairbuilder, and his owner rented
335 him out to men building fine homes as far away as Mississippi. . . . I have heard it
342 said that he built at least one hundred stairways, never using a plan, but producing
curved lines that no modern builder has approached in graceful beauty." At Inca-
567 chee Plantation there is a wrought-iron basket made by a colored blacksmith for
326 holding flaming fat-wood (pine) knots. I am covetous every time I see it. And in
the plant of the Brunswick Marine Company, I am told, there are several mechan-
ics trained in the old school who show unusual skill in metal-work.

During the last depression, when there was no work for the Negro cabinet-
322 makers and carpenters, whittling was the inevitable pastime for Willy Rogers, of
[335] Darien and Lonnie Davis, of St. Simon's. (Illustrations 20 and 21).[A] Both made a
[461] number of canes which were ornamented with alligators climbing their length.
[191] These wood carvings are obviously in line with West African tradition, and indicate
that the sculptor's art is only dormant in the race. Given leisure, enough to eat, and
461 greater respect for his own mode of expression, the Negro might again take to the

517 A,[For Illustrations 20 & 21, see Categories 326 & 322, plate facing p. 113--Analyst]

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536 27)[A] makes with head and shoulders bowed slightly forward, arms held close to her body, elbows bent at right angles, forearms thrust out before her, and palms upturned in a supplicating gesture. White musicians and dancers have obtained much from these untutored people, who appear to have an inborn gift for rhythm in its many manifestations. Work or play, preaching, praying, music, sculpture, or dancing—all are one to them when it comes to rhythmic expression.

HA'K 'E ANGELS

567 Deacon Eddy Thorpe, of McIntosh County, who contributed this Watch
Night shout, explained that the slaves, when allowed to go to a praise-house that was
796 out of bounds, were given passes with their promise to return before sun-up. On
New Year's Eve the service consisted of prayers, religious songs, and a sermon by
the preacher. At midnight, different members offered thanks to the Good Lord for
(782) the blessings of the past twelve months and implored His aid for the year to come.
The shouting then began, and continued until dawn. This shout, which varies little
in content or rhythm in Glynn, Liberty, McIntosh, and Camden counties,[3] was the
533 last to be sung as the watcher, appointed for that duty, announced: "Day's
a-comin' ":

[539]
Day, day Oh—see day's a-comin'
Ha'k 'e angels
Day, day Oh—see day's a-comin'
Ha'k 'e angels

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[3] In the vicinity of Albany, Georgia, there is a similar version that uses "Yonder Come Day" instead of "Ha'k 'e Angels."

A. [For Illustration 27, see Category 142, plate facing p. 161--Analyst]

533 them with the ring-games of the white people. Undoubtedly there is sound founda-
(177) tion for assuming that they owe something to English originals, for many show it,
either in the action, or in certain leading lines. On the other hand, they are more
melodious than the game songs of the whites; they employ an amusing variety of
dance steps, possess a contagious rhythm, and make use of vigorous hand clapping,
which is utterly unlike anything European. These same characteristics are empha-
sized by Natalie Curtis-Burlin, in *Songs and Tales from the Dark Continent*, and by
N. G. J. Ballanta, in his article on "Music of the African Races." Their descriptions
of African dance songs might well apply to those of the Georgia Negroes prior to
1900. The similarity indicates that here again we may have such an equal proportion
of English and African influence as is found in the other groups of Negro songs.

Not being a scientist, I am privileged to make guesses, and one of them is tied
175 up with the history of our pioneers. In the early years of the nineteenth century, a
569 host of planters, with their families and slaves, moved to the richer lands farther
west. The number that went over the Federal Road into Alabama was so great that
a lone eastbound traveler reported from Georgia that he was never out of sight of a
long line of migrants. A good indication of the extent of the westward movement is
given in the fact that the population of Texas increased from four thousand in 1820
to almost twenty thousand in 1830. Most of the settlers were Southerners, who took
their slaves with them. In those frontier days the smaller property owners worked
175 with their slaves, and attended the same revivals. Because of this the songs and cus-
567 toms of one were bound to influence those of the other. The more religious pioneers
were opposed to dancing, and used these innocent party games, with their accom-
533 panying songs, as a substitute at their social gatherings long after they had been dis-
(177) carded by the fashionable planters of the southeastern seaboard, and relegated to
the Negroes and children. Original sin of course sees to the preservation of the fiddle
175 songs; we are told that, in the days before railroads provided an easy means of com-
533 munication with the outside world, social life in the newly-settled territories was
"sluggish in some ways and wild in others." In consequence the connection between
the worldly songs found on the coast of Georgia and the hill-billy and cowboy songs
of the slave states west of the Mississippi River seems to me self-evident.

JOHN, JOHN

159 The temptation is strong to tell the clever sayings of Quarterman, but the songs he sang, and not what he said, must take precedence. However, one incident which 159 •567 has a bearing on history must be mentioned. Quarterman's mother was a Butler slave, like Liverpool, but before Quarterman was born she was taken by Roswell King in exchange for services as manager of the Butler estate, and placed on his Liberty County plantation.

The last time that Liverpool and Quarterman were together at my Corner for a "sing," Liverpool made use of the opportunity to deliver his customary eulogy of Pierce Butler and his family. I saw that Quarterman was uneasy and fidgety. The minute that Liverpool showed signs of stopping, Quarterman was on his feet and told the audience what a superior "Maussa" he had had. Shades of Fanny Kemble and all departed abolitionists! The irony of the situation is apparent to those who have read what Fanny Kemble said in her *Journal* about Quarterman's master, "Mr. K." I saw the meeting of "Mr. K.'s" two grandchildren, Miss Julia King and her brother Audley, with Quarterman, and the delight of all three was 177 567 extremely significant. We read a good deal these days about the way the Negroes "hate" the white people. But let me say that such was not the universal rule in the old days under the patriarchal form of society.[7] The type of education given today, instead of closing the breach between the races, appears to be widening it. I have found only one ex-slave who shows bitterness, and that is toward a distracted mistress who, during war-time, exacted two tasks when one had been the usual requirement.

159 533 Quarterman sang many pretty hymns, but in the next breath he sang slave songs that came "out of Maffew. You fine 'em right dere." When I tried to explain that the words did not make the tune, he was puzzled. According to him all you had to do was to go to the Bible and there was your song. There is more to the idea than appears on the surface. You heard a verse read and at once its rhythm fitted something that was sung in Africa. Perhaps this is why the Negroes call the old songs "familiar tunes."

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[7] *It is evident from the story of "The Old-Time Negro," by Thomas Nelson Page, that "the relation which once existed all over the South between the old-time Southerner and the old-time darkey . . . still exists where the latter survives."*

WHEN MY LORD CALLS ME I MUST GO

159 •567 The last time Lady Butler saw Liverpool she told him that he must be here when next she came to America. His reply was: "When my Lord calls me I must go." On one of her yearly visits to Darien, she gave him a rose to wear in his buttonhole, and called him "the last flower of the Butler flock." When she saw him again, she found that the rose had miraculously become a perennial from the five and ten cent store. To the paper rose he attached the tribute she had paid him!

Liverpool was loyalty itself to the family of his master, and the same can be said of Dan Wing, who went to England with his mistress, Frances Butler Leigh,[8] when she married the Dean of Hereford Cathedral. Dan and Liverpool, both mentioned in Mrs. Leigh's *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation* (1866–1876), were keenly interested in what she had said about them. When I asked Liverpool about his display of insubordination, of which she tells, he said—with a chuckle—that his head had been cut by Mr. N., the overseer, because of "back-talk." However, Mrs. Leigh apparently pardoned his outbreak, for he proudly showed me the photograph of herself which she had given him.

567 156 No one, least of all the descendants of the slave-owners, could wish for a return of the institution, but a system that could produce such fine characters as the Caters' Dembo, the Kings' Neptun', his son Clarence,[9] the Butlers' Dan and Liverpool, and "Miss Sis" Clifton's Mary Covington—born soon after freedom—and many other Negroes I could name, must have had its redeeming features. I know it will be said the system had little to do with their development, that it was the individual. Maybe so, but after reading everything I can find concerning our ante-bellum Negroes I wonder why there are not more who are outstanding characters today. Per-

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[8] The daughter of Fanny Kemble and the mother of Alice, who became Lady Butler.

[9] Clarence's death, a couple of years ago, was a great loss to our community. He was a good man and an excellent singer.

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567 156 haps it is true that certain plantation owners were of a superior type and provided a superior example; or was it that the education received by the slaves was better suited to their needs?

533 539

I'm goin' to cross that ocean by mysel'
by mysel'
I'm goin' to cross that ocean by mysel'
by mysel'
When my Lord call me I must go
I'm goin' to cross that ocean by mysel'.

In that lonesome valley by mysel'
by mysel'
In that lonesome valley by mysel'
by mysel'
I'm goin' to weep like a willo' moan like a dove
I'm goin' to cross that ocean by mysel'.

Weepin' Mary weep no mor'
weep no mor'
Weepin' Mary weep no mor'
weep no mor'
When my Lord call me I must go
I'm goin' to cross that ocean by mysel'.

Doubtful Thomas don't y'u doubt no mor'
doubt no mor'
Doubtful Thomas don't y'u doubt no mor'
doubt no mor'
When my Lord calls me I must go
I'm goin' to cross that ocean by mysel'.

THE BELL DONE RING

533 171 In a collection of *African Music* recorded by Laura C. Boulton a war song[10] is given from the Tuareg tribe of the French Sudan, near Timbuctoo, which is strikingly similar to a sermon song of Henry Shaw's, even to the peculiar reedy quality of tone.[11] The Tuareg singer recites the brave deeds of a chief; Henry recounts the adventures of Jonah.

533 126 It has been practically impossible to take down Henry's song as he sings it. When he recites it, he gives an entirely different version. If I ask the meaning of a line, he has to begin all over again—and we never get very far.

533 539

Chorus: Live humble, humble, humble your soul
The bell done ring.
Live humble little chil'run
The bell done ring.
Live humble little soul
The bell done ring.
Live humble I say
The bell done ring.

"Live humble" is sung three more times with the response, "The bell done ring," following each line, and the chorus ends with its first four lines. The gist of the narrative section follows the story of Jonah's tribulations quite literally.

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[10] *Vol. I, record 86-A.*

(567) [11] *Our coastal Negroes appear to be musically more closely allied to the Tuaregs than to any other African tribe of whose songs I have been able to secure records. Record 86-B of the same series gives a lullaby sung by a Tuareg woman which—except for the difference in language—might be sung by a grandmother anywhere along this coast. If we knew the period in which certain groups of slaves came to America, and the section of Africa from which they were obtained, we might learn more about their musical background. Two records made by the Denis-Roosevelt expedition in the Belgian Congo indicate that the slaves of South Carolina and Georgia might have come from that region, since their ring-shouts show a similarity to Nos. 6 and 10 in tone, rhythm, and hand clapping. The "sharp exhalation of breath" heard in No. 10 is also demonstrated by some of our ex-slaves, but they do no "stomping," although on two or three occasions I have seen Negroes from the interior do it.*

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763 she was told and Henry said: "Now that is over." That night he died in his sleep.

However, not all premonitions materialize. I was told of an instance on Edisto Island, where a young girl was stricken and believed her last hour had come. Relations were summoned, and the usual rites were conducted. At the last moment, however, when she was expected to make a proper exit, she was overcome with a desire to eat. She clamored for food, and the watchers went home in disgust.

789 In the old days it was the custom to send messages by the dying to those who
763 had gone before.[10] A friend told me how an ex-slave came to her house just before
775 her father's funeral, and said he wanted to talk to "Marse Jim." She explained to the old man that her father had just died. He said: "I know it. I want to talk to him." Of course he was given permission. How one wishes the conversation could have been overheard!

763 On the out islands of the Bahamas, the custom of "settin'-up" with the dying
771 is an event enjoyed by the one who is bound for the other world quite as much as by those who come for a last visit. The procedure is practically the same as on the mainland, as is to be expected, since the custom was carried from the States at the end of the Revolution by slaves of the loyalists from South Carolina and Georgia. An acquaintance who spent a winter on one of the Berry Islands gave an account of a "settin'-up" with which she was concerned. A neighboring colored woman, who was very old, decided it was time for her to die, and begged for a certain white dress in which to lie in state. She set the date of her death, and invited her friends from the adjoining islands to be with her on the momentous occasion. She looked very handsome, I was told, and all went well—but twenty-four hours passed, and she did not die. Another day went by, and she still clung to life. When nothing happened on the third day, the guests were obliged to return to their respective homes. In a couple of weeks, however, she sent for them again. This time luck was with her, and she departed according to schedule.

IN THAT OLD FIELD

533 Susyanna (Illustration 29),[A] learned this lonesome melody from her grand-
567 mother, who was a slave. Sung in a minor key, it is one to which the printed word and note can never do justice. It must be heard to be appreciated. "That old field"
(764) is the Negro name for a burying ground, and the slave, like his cousins in Africa, was quite as much concerned with the life to come as with that of the moment.

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[10] *As exemplified in the song: "Ride on, Conquering King," p. 183.*

A, [For Illustration 29, see Category 142, plate facing p. 177--Analyst]

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O DE ROBE

533 177 The Irish ditch-diggers, employed in repairing the banks enclosing the rice fields of Glynn County, probably account for the Celtic lilt in this tune.[17] The Negroes have always been great borrowers, musically speaking, but, to my mind, that matters little when they make the material so completely their own that the result is entirely different, and often an improvement on the original. This was clearly the case with the ante-bellum melodies of the white plantation owners. A race which could turn dreary book hymns into living creations deserves great applause, and the less said about the source of its inspiration the better—unless from a desire to call attention to its superior musical gift.

533 539

Chorus: O de robe de robe my Lord
De robe all ready now
O de robe de robe my Lord
De robe all ready now.

My mother gone an' she lef' me heah
De robe all ready now
My mother gone an' she lef' me heah
De robe all ready now.

(repeat chorus)

Christian trials just begun
De robe all ready now
Christian trials just begun
De robe all ready now.

(repeat chorus)

Ferry boat goin' to carry us over
De robe all ready now
Ferry boat goin' to carry us over
De robe all ready now.

(repeat chorus)

Joe contributes additional verses:

You get in trouble
De robe all ready now
Write to my Jesus
De robe all ready now.

Write to my Jesus t' sen' another angel
De robe all ready now
Send another angel t' trouble the water
De robe all ready now.

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464 567

[17] *In 1838-39 it was found that the work of digging the canal connecting Brunswick with the Altamaha River—opened its length but never used—was too heavy for the majority of the cotton-field Negroes. Only about two hundred of the original five hundred were retained, and a large number of Irishmen were brought in. From such a contact it can be seen how the word "wake" came to be substituted for "settin'-up," since the two customs—except for the drinking—are quite similar.*

FOR I AIN' GOIN' T' DIE NO MO'

533 764 (574) The rhythm and tune of this "settin'-up" song suggest an old English ballad. As can be seen, there is nothing religious about the ironic observation in the first two lines. Julia, who taught me the song, laughingly said: "It's true all right. Mighty few visit the sick, but hundreds go to the wake and the buryin'."

(539)
When I'm on my sick bed—nobody visit me
But now I'm goin' to the graveyard—everybody follow me.
My sister won't y'u low my pillow
Low—low—O-h low
My sister won't y'u low my pillow
Low—for I ain' goin' t' die no mo'.
Somebody goin' to low my pillow
Low—low—O-h low
Somebody goin' to low my pillow
Low—for I ain' goin' t' die no mo'.

159 567 Janey Jackson, (Illustration 33),[A] one of the most picturesque characters of Brunswick sang an additional verse of the same song. Janey was born on St. Simon's, in "Nigger House Field" at Kelvin Grove, in 1826. At the age of twelve she was sold by the Caters, with her parents,[21] two sisters and a brother, to Mr. Henry duBignon of Jekyl Island. She told me her family came over to St. Simon's frequently to see friends and relatives, as it was only a short row at low tide before the channel was deepened. Janey described the Caters' Old Dembo, Neptun' Small, father of Clarence and Cornelia, and Adam Proctor, father of Julia and Willis. No doubt it was on St. Simon's that she learned this verse:

(533) (539)
When I bin in de worl' bin a sin—nobody had nothin' to say
But now I come into de House of God—everybody got somethin' to say.
Carry me an' bring me—in dat returnal day
Carry me an' bring me—in dat returnal day.

Under the influence of the duBignons, from whom she also learned to speak French, Janey became a Catholic; and when she went to live in Brunswick, she

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[21] *Janey's father, Jack, was an African prince, but her mother was "country born" (born in America).*

A, [For Illustration 33, see Category 142, plate facing p. 225--Analyst]

159 567 always attended early mass. She never married; her sweetheart, Ishmael, belonged to another family, and his owners, thinking he would not be worth much to them in the field if his wife were on another plantation, encouraged a match with one of their own slaves.

159 To the end of her life, she smoked a pipe, and cooked her food in a black pot over a fire in the yard exactly as she had done in her youth. She must have been very strong, as she rowed a boat, did her half-acre of cotton, and, in her own words, "never knew what it was to be tired." She was a hundred and nine years old when she died in 1936, and evidently came of an exceptionally long-lived family, for her father was a centenarian, her sister lived to be a hundred and eight, and a cousin, also born in 1826, outlived her. Janey was straight and healthy to the last, and the sphinx-like, unwrinkled face in her coffin was like a piece of smooth black ebony. I had not realized in life how handsome she was or how Egyptian were her features. The inexpressible dignity of that dark mask so impressed me that I went back three times to make sure I would not forget it.

"BURYIN'"

764 533 Old residents of St. Simon's tell me that before the days of automobiles, when even horses[22] and wagons were luxuries, a Negro "buryin'" was an impressive affair. The mourners sang as they walked from the church, where the service was held, to the graveyard a mile away. The singers could be heard the minute they left the church, for at that time "they opened their mouths. They weren't like the young people today—too proud to sing."[23]

764 (492) (493) The home-made coffin, lined with "paper cambric" and covered with black calico or darkened with lampblack, was placed in the "rough box" and carried on a one-horse wagon. Only the preacher rode with the driver. The men walked single file on one side of the road and the women on the other.

(562) (481) (793) When the minister could not come to the island for the church service, it was not held until his next visit—possibly in three weeks, sometimes in three months. In the days when "Reverend" Andrew Neal officiated, if he was urgently needed to

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(231) (134) [22] *After the War Between the States only a vicious stallion, belonging to the Coupers, was left on St. Simon's. It was necessary to hobble him before he could be used. There were plenty of ponies, called "tackies," living on the salt marshes; but Joe tells me they were wild, like deer, and it never paid to buy one.*

[23] *It was said of Adam and Neptun' Small and MacWilliams that they could be heard a mile —than which, according to slave standards, there was no higher praise.*

533 men, and the odd break on the top note before the singer suddenly dropped a whole octave. These must have been conventions, for since 1890 I have not heard
533 anybody except these two men use them. Floyd sings "Free at Last" with all the
505 ancient frills, and tells me the tune was used for "blockin' timber." Joe mentions
461 such technical lumber-loading terms as "wing-tier," which probably means just what the word implies, and "kelson knees," which the Oxford Dictionary defines as "a line of timber placed inside a ship along the floor timbers and parallel with the keel." The "beam-dog" is, I gather, a grappling-iron with a fang which clutches the log or piece of timber to be handled. "Block and tickle" means a system of pulleys by which this work was done. Joe learned such work as "narrow trunkin' "—stowing lumber in a peculiar way—from colored men who had been taught by Irish stevedores. The head stevedore was a white man who contracted to load a vessel for so much per thousand feet. Big ships employed four colored stevedores called "headers,"[7] and used derricks; schooners needed only three headers—one outside and two inside. Short lumber went into the hatch, but for long lumber you had to "knock out the port," which was generally in the bow. In stowing cotton, the bale, as far as I could figure out, was lowered into the hold in a sling with three hooks attached, something like an ice-hook with an extra prong. Then it was rammed tightly into place by what "Cap'n" Joe[8] (Illustration 31) calls a "snilo"—a post against which the cotton jack was placed. "Pullin' lumber" meant shoving it on a long greased skid, waist high, made up of a series of carpenter's horses. There were generally four men at one end, and the same number at the other.

533
461 There are many shanties of which only fragments remain. One about the menu of the captain indicates, as Miss Colcord tells us, that it might have originated on a slave ship in tropical waters:

[539]
What do you think he had for dinner?
Monkey soup an' gray molasses.
Blow, my bully boys, blow!

Floyd says it was used to "hist the gaff when the cap'n was ready to go to sea." He remembers another fragment which runs like this: "Clear the track an' let the bullgine back," and another:

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[7] The "headers" were the stevedores responsible for the proper loading of a vessel.

[567] [8] *In plantation days the most important Negro slave was the "driver." His distasteful task was to see that the orders of the white overseer were carried out. As can be imagined the very name "driver" was unpopular, and after emancipation the Negro who had charge of a gang of laborers was called "Cap'n," and the old term is no longer heard.*

A,[For Illustration 31, see Category 142, plate facing p. 193--Analyst]

175 long canoe, hollowed out of the trunk of a single cypress and rowed by six negroes,
501 who were singing loudly and keeping time to the stroke of their oars." He went on to
533 say: "For many a mile we saw no habitations, and the solitude was profound; but
461 our black oarsmen made the woods echo to their song. One of them taking the lead,
first improvised a verse, paying compliments to his master's family, and to a celebrated black beauty of the neighborhood, who was compared to the 'red bird.' The
other five then joined in the chorus, always repeating the same words. Occasionally
they struck up a hymn, in which the most sacred subjects were handled with strange
familiarity, and which, though nothing irreverent was meant, sounded oddly to our
ears, and, when following a love ditty, almost profane."

Lyell's account of his canoe trip from Hopeton to visit Mr. Couper's summer
175 residence on St. Simon's Island, fifteen miles distant, is of interest for several rea-
567 sons. In describing the Negro houses on Butler Island, where the party landed on
(342) their way, he tells us they "were neat, and whitewashed, all floored with wood, each
(114) with an apartment called the hall, two sleeping rooms, and a loft for the children"
—which is contrary to what Fanny Kemble had written about the selfsame houses,
[243] a few years earlier. He also mentioned seeing ricks of rice raised on props five feet
high, to protect them from the sea, which, during hurricanes, has been known to
rise five or six feet. His observations on the mental development of the slaves are
(243) particularly significant: "It is evident that on these rice farms, where the negroes
associate with scarcely any whites, except the overseer and his family, and have but
little intercourse with the slaves of other estates, they must remain far more stationary than where, as in a large part of Georgia, they are about equal in number to the
whites, or even form a minority. . . . In Glynn County, where we are now residing,
[162] there are no less than four thousand negroes to seven hundred whites,[24] whereas
in Georgia generally there are only 281,000 in a population of 691,000 or more
whites than colored people."

175 I give these figures because they explain why more distinctive slave songs can
567 be found in the rice swamps and cotton plantations of the adjoining sea islands than
243 in the Piedmont section where Anglo-Saxon influence has always predominated. In
all probability we have the malaria mosquito and the absentee landlords to thank
[164] for this. In Africa the black race had developed an immunity to malaria—which they

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[24] *About the same ratio as when I first went to St. Simon's. Charles Spalding Wylly states that in 1810 almost every acre of arable land on St. Simon's was under cultivation. There were fourteen plantations and a slave population of about 1200.*

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175 are now losing—and the resistance of the slaves to "the miasma of the rice fields" enabled
● 567 them to take care of the crop during the "pestilential season" with the minimum
243 of white supervision. In consequence, all white residents who could leave[28]
[164] fled at nightfall to the "salts"—as the sea marshes were called—or to the dry and
higher pine land, whichever might be nearer, and the Negroes were left very much
to themselves. It requires no stretch of the imagination to assume that the beloved
[533] rhythms and dances that had been brought from Africa were kept alive in just this
[535] way. For which let me say—God be praised! I have never been able to believe that
[178] all virtue was vested in the white man or his music.

Another statement of Lyell's is so accurate that it should be given here. He tells
175 us that "The slaves identify themselves with the master, and their sense of their own
567 importance rises with his success in life." Mrs. Shadman, who knew all the ex-slaves
578 on St. Simon's, told me that Maum Rhina at Cannon's Point was heard to say: "I
hol' my head jus' as high as my Missus. I'se a Wylly nig'ah." The Wylly Negroes
always felt they were superior to those of the Hazzards, who lived on the adjoining
plantation. The feeling of animosity that has persisted for more than a century
among the descendants of the slaves of the two plantations may be because of the
duel over a boundary dispute, in which young Wylly was killed by his neighbor, Dr.
Hazzard.

In spite of the Negroes being passionately fond of music and dancing, the activity
175 of the Baptist and Methodist missionaries was such before 1845 that Lyell
797 tells us: "On the Hopeton Plantation above twenty violins have been silenced."
533 The ban on secular music was the same in the vicinity of Beaufort, South Carolina.
534 The editors of *Slave Songs of the United States* reported that they never saw a
musical instrument among the Port Royal freedmen, and mentioned that the last
violin, owned by a "wordly man," disappeared from Coffin's Point in 1861. They
175 expressed regret that they could not obtain enough secular songs to make a division
533 by themselves, and went on to say: "It is . . . already becoming difficult to obtain
these songs. Even the 'spirituals' are going out of use on the plantations, superseded
(177) by the new style of religious music, 'closely imitated from the white people.' " The
statement made by the editors that "The same songs are used for rowing as for
(184) shouting," holds true on the coast of Georgia, and it is interesting to find that the
identical tunes were favorites the length of the sea-island chain between the Peedee
and the Satilla Rivers. (Map, page xxxii.)

184
114 The similarity of the speech, customs, and music of the Gullah Negroes through-

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[28] *The terms of the overseer's contract required his presence on the plantation except under urgent circumstances.*

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184 out this section is not surprising to those who have studied its social and economic
114 conditions at first hand—or have carefully read *Seed from Madagascar* by Duncan
Clinch Heyward. This gentleman's words are authoritative. He learned planting
114 methods and the management of Negro labor at first hand on the Combahee swamp
plantations of his paternal ancestors in South Carolina and at the Clinch Plantation,
called Refuge, on the Satilla River in Georgia, where his maternal ancestors were
also rice planters.

175 In *American Humor*, Constance Rourke quotes a traveler as saying in 1795
that "The blacks are the great humorists of the nation." She goes on to tell us how
522 Negro humor has always been abundant, and how, from it, early minstrels drew as
533 from a primal source. She also says that many minstrels had lived in the South and
West and knew the Negro at first hand. One of them saw an old peddler of watermelons
with a donkey cart in a Georgia town, and followed him about until he had
mastered his lingo, cries, and snatches of song, which may account for the similarity
175 of our Negro secular songs to those of the minstrel stage. Few of the white singers,
however, gave credit where it was due. Miss Rourke states that "Plantation owners
533 on the Mississippi had crews of black oarsmen who sang as they rowed and improvised
[501] good-natured verses to match the occasions of the day. . . .[28] A western poet
[461] declared that 'among the earliest original verses of the West were sundry African
● [567] melodies celebrating the coon hunt and the vicissitudes of river navigation.' The
Negro was to be seen everywhere in the South and in the new Southwest, on small
farms and great plantations, on roads and levees. He was often an all but equal member
of many a pioneering expedition. He became, in short, a dominant figure in spite
of his condition and commanded a definite portraiture."

533 Because of his position in democratic communities it is readily seen why the
songs of the Negro have left their stamp on those of the hill-billy and the cowboy;
177 and when he attended the same revival meetings as the whites—as he frequently did
—his mode of singing undoubtedly exerted as much influence upon their religious
songs as his secular music does today upon our radio singers.

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[28] *They carried on a tradition that was characteristic of the South Carolina and Georgia coast. Liverpool, who was stroke oar of the Butler Island crew of ten men, told me they rowed a cypress dugout, thirty-three feet long, made from one immense log. His favorite rowing song was "Zion," but others preferred "Knee-bone." Mrs. G. V. Cate tells us, in* Our Todays and Yesterdays, *"there was a spirit of rivalry among the planters to have the best boat . . . and a desire on the part of the slaves to sing the best songs. The oarsmen of one plantation would never sing the songs belonging to another plantation," and when a boat passed at night it would be known from the song to what plantation the singers belonged.*

[171] *In* A Walk across Africa, *Grant describes a very large canoe—hollowed out of an immense tree—that carried a ton and a half.*

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533 After death I got to stan' a tes'
539 After death I got to stan' a tes'
Oh Lordy, after death I got to stan' a tes'
Lord, I wouldn' mind dyin' if dyin' was all.

533 461 264 (191) Dishwashing is another of the monotonous jobs which invite the accompaniment of flowing song. In my own kitchen I have heard dishes disposed of to a tune which, surprisingly enough, has an Algerian counterpart. I heard it first, from my hotel on the heights of Constantine, played on a primitive pipe in the little Berber village at the base of the cliff far below. It was repeated over and over—that is why I am familiar with it. Apparently, the tune bothered a cow, for her bellowing frequently gave me a respite. The air is lovely, but when heard by the hour it is not so enjoyable.

(539) I want a die easy when I die
O when I die.
I want a die easy when I die
I want a die easy when I die—Shout salvation as I fly
I want a die easy when I die.

252 354 Until after the War Between the States stoves were unknown in the South, and cooking was done mostly in large fireplaces with cranes and hooks for hanging pots and kettles over the heat. Meat was roasted in "tin kitchens" placed in front of the fire, although the remains of an enormous brick oven at Cannon's Point indicate the part it played in the large-scale hospitality of the Couper family. Cooking, in fact, was one of those interrupted jobs which required undivided attention, and for that reason, perhaps, I never heard of a good cook who sang.

248 567 461 (412) (533) On St. Simon's and Jekyl Islands great quantities of cotton were grown. The best description of the process was given by Captain Basil Hall in 1828. He tells how the "task" varied with the heaviness of the work. In describing the "listing" of the ground—breaking it with a broad cotton-field hoe—he said that "a full hand lists half an acre." Jancy Jackson must have been a full hand, for she told of doing her half-acre and thinking nothing of it. She and Floyd White's parents belonged to the Caters, and both sang a tune which was a favorite for hoeing cotton. They agreed that "June month was a ha'd month": the weeds grew fast and the sun was hot.

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533 567 Quarterman told me that when the Negroes "suspicioned" someone was telling tales to the driver to get one of them a whipping, they would sing a song like the following while at work in the field:

[539]

O Judyas he wuz a 'ceitful man
He went an' betray a mos' innocen' man.
Fo' thirty pieces a silver dat it wuz done
He went in de woods an' e' self he hung.

793 533 A Negro "stump-knocker"—as itinerant preachers without a regular charge used to be called—frankly told me he wasn't much on preaching, but when it came to singing he always got his people—and a meal. Another preacher of this class, with a remarkable flow of rhythmic words and a fine grasp of the dramatic build-up—not necessarily connected with ideas—boasted to me of his ability to get his congregation "goin'."

FIVE FINGERS IN THE BOLL

248 533 When I asked Josephine what the words "five fingers in the boll" meant, she explained that in the shade at the bottom of the stalk of cotton the bolls are likely to be rotten; they come off in the hand, and "y'u can't make any time grabbin' de cotton out uv 'em." "Fingers" are the compartments holding the white fiber. The song has reference to the variety that contains five in a boll, but I am told that some have three, and others four. I confess I never noticed how many there were.

533 539

Way down in the bottom—whah the cotton boll's a rotten
Won' get my hundud [29] all day
Way down in the bottom—whah the cotton boll's a rotten
Won' get my hundud all day.
Befo'e I'll be beated—befo'e I'll be cheated
I'll leave five finguhs in the boll
Befo'e I'll be beated—befo'e I'll be cheated
I'll leave five finguhs in the boll.
Black man beat me—white man cheat me
Won' get my hundud all day
Black man beat me—white man cheat me
Won' get my hundud all day.

[433] [248] [29] *Ninety pounds of cotton was looked upon as the least a hand should pick in a day.*

I

GULLAH: THE DIALECT OF THE NEGROES OF ST. HELENA ISLAND

INTRODUCTION

THE NEGROES of St. Helena Island speak a dialect 197
which is peculiar to the Negroes of the tidewater section of South Carolina and Georgia.[1] So unusual is the dialect of this area that an up-country person on first hearing it is likely to think that he is listening to a foreign language. It is as different from what is generally thought of as Negro dialect as the speech of the white Georgian is from that of the Chicagoan. With its rapidly spoken phrases, its staccato accents, and its rising and falling intonations, it sounds to the average American more like French or Spanish than any English he has ever heard.

This dialect is known as Gullah, as are also the Ne- [101]
groes who speak it. How the word Gullah came to be so
applied cannot be determined satisfactorily. Certainly it 101
has no ethnological significance, for the slaves were not 175
derived from any one tribal group in sufficient numbers 567

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[1] This dialect was first brought to the attention of scholars by such works as Mrs. Caroline Gilman's *Recollections of a Southern Matron*, 1837; William Gilmore Simms', *The Wigwam and the Cabin*, 1845, and other stories; and Allen's *Slave Songs of the United States*, 1861. Later writers like Joel Chandler Harris, Mrs. A. M. H. Christensen, and Charles C. Jones published collections of folklore in the dialect. Still later the dialect began to receive some attention for its own sake, chiefly from John Bennett, Ambrose Gonzales, Marcellus S. Whaley, and Reed Smith. The articles by Bennett, published in the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Oct., 1908, and Jan., 1909, and the recent study by Smith, published as Extension Bulletin No. 190, University of South Carolina, contain the best analyses of the dialect. I have drawn freely from these and other sources for suggestions. For further references to the literature on Gullah, see the bibliography. (113)

101 for that group to play an important role. Such evidence
175 as we have, although it is rather meager, seems to indicate
567 that the tribal composition of the slaves was a hodge-podge of a score or more of West and Central African peoples. In the records of the Charleston slave merchants and in the files of *The South Carolina Gazette* will be found statements which prove the diversity of African stocks among the slaves. A recent research reveals that the following African tribes or regions were specifically mentioned in the Charleston slave market:[2] Gambia River, Whidah, Fantee, Coromantine, Bassa, Bance Island, Angola, Bight, Calabar, Messe-Congo, and Ebo.

101 In an excellent study of the Gullah dialect, Professor
174 Reed Smith, of the University of South Carolina, comments as follows on the probable origin of the term Gullah:[3]

> Both the word Gullah and the Negroes so named came from the West Coast of Africa, but exactly where has not been agreed upon. There are two widely-held conjectures. One is that Gullah is a shortened form of Angola, the name of an African West Coast district lying south of the Equator and the mouth of the Congo River. A small but positive bit of evidence to this effect is found in an entry of the Charleston City Council, under the year

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(113) [2] Elizabeth Donnan, "The Slave Trade in South Carolina Before the Revolution." *American Historical Review*, July, 1928. Miss Donnan makes this pertinent comment in a footnote: "It is a puzzling fact that the marked differences between the negro tribes, regarded as so important on their arrival, seem to have been speedily lost sight of. Advertisements of seasoned negroes, in so far as the writer has examined them, seldom emphasize the tribe or African locality from which the negro came; notices of runaway negroes occasionally mention place of origin but frequently do not. The evidence seems also to indicate that country-born negroes had lost all distinguishing characteristics or that the planter had grown oblivious to them with his longer association with the negroes."

(113) [3] *Gullah*, pp. 7-8. The Charleston City Council entry mentioned is probably that found in *An Account of the Late Intended Insurrection*, etc., published by A. E. Miller, Charleston, 1822.

101 of slavery? Certainly there is something to be said in favor of the accuracy of the "Gullah or Angola" derivation.

THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE GULLAH DIALECT

197 Gullah has been called the most African of any of our Negro dialects, yet it can be traced back in practically every detail to English dialect speech. There has long been a popular belief in this country to the effect that Southern white speech is what it is because of the Negro. This idea needs to be reversed, for both the Negro and the white man in the South speak English as they learned it from the latter's ancestors. An understanding of the historical and cultural factors pertaining to the relations of whites and Negroes in the early days of slavery in South Carolina is essential to an appreciation of the origin of the Gullah dialect. These may be sketched very briefly.

175 Speaking of the environment in which the Gullah dialect was born, Smith says:[5]

> This section, from Colonial days to the Civil War, was the
> richest and most cultured of that part of the South. Rice, the
> (243) chief low-country crop of that day, was extremely lucrative under
> (248) slave-labor, as was the silky, long-staple sea-island cotton. Large
> plantations of thousands of acres were the rule, on which the
> •(567) wealthy planters lived in characteristic, often feudal prosperity.
> . . . Before the war, each plantation was a little world apart.
> 175 The slaves lived together, segregated in their own special quarters.
> 567 The Negroes outnumbered the whites in the ratio of tens and hundreds to one, and only the house-servants and body-servants came
> into close contact with their owners. The large majority of field-
> (178) hands habitually saw only each other, their overseers, and occa-

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[5] *Gullah*, pp. 9-10.

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sionally a white servant. Grandparents, parents, children, and 175
grand-children succeeded each other on the same plantation, 567
growing up under intimate communal relationships but in almost 178
complete isolation from the outside world. Thus their whole body of traditions, customs, superstitions, language, religion, and mental background remained in a state of arrested development and were handed down practically unchanged.

This picture is accurate for the period following the 175
introduction of rice and cotton culture. There was, however, a period preceding the development of the large plantation system during which the South Carolina colonists made their living chiefly from small plantings and from naval stores and other products arising from the process of clearing the land: pitch, masts, beams, staves, and the like. It took years to build up a large plantation. Among the early land holders there were probably very few who had enjoyed a status of wealth and high education in the mother country. The typical settler was an English peasant, laborer, or middle-class man with very limited means who began with a small piece of land and gradually increased his holdings, acquiring indentured servants or slaves or both for his labor supply. There was here and there a man of wealth and distinction, but the typical colonist was a man of small means, one who spoke dialect English, as distinguished from literary English.
The most numerous class in the colony before the 175
slave trade began to flourish was composed of indentured 177
servants, laborers, and artisans. They worked side by 567
side with the Negroes and came into contact with them in 191
various other ways, and it was from them that the slaves learned most of their English.

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175 Another important factor in the development of Gul-
177 lah is the tendency of the white man to reduce his lan-
191 guage to a lower level when communicating with someone
who does not speak English. In breaking in new Negroes
• 567 the white man used a sort of "baby talk." He simplified
197 tenses, inflections, gender, number, etc., until there was
left but a skeleton of literary English. What the Negro
heard, therefore, was something still more simplified than
the English dialect which the white servants and laborers
around him used.

Gullah was thus in the making, in fact, was probably fairly well made, before the large plantation régime came into existence. Successive additions of new slaves undoubtedly acquired their language education from the Negroes who had already assimilated to some extent the English of their white associates. Later, when rice and sea-island cotton culture made large plantations possible, the system of slave organization and discipline was such that slaves had few contacts with the class of whites who spoke the literary English.[6] Slaves were supervised by overseers whose speech was, as a rule, that of the English peasantry.

175 The Civil War and emancipation made very little dif-
567 ference in the lives of the slaves. Most of the Negroes
remained where they were. Indeed, if anything, they
were now more isolated than before, because many of the
white planters, made penniless by the war, left their
177 plantations and sought their fortunes elsewhere. On some

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[6] The house servants are excepted, of course. Occasionally one finds a Negro in the Gullah country who speaks very clearly and has a surprisingly large vocabulary. It nearly always turns out that he was a domestic servant in the home of some cultured planter.

000 of the low-country aristocracy. An expert in South Carolina linguistics can listen to a low-country man for a moment and tell whether he is from Georgetown, Charleston, Edisto, Beaufort, or some other locality. The low-country speech has certain characteristics which distinguish it from the up-country speech, as is true in the case of the Negro, yet there are local variations depending upon the English background and subsequent environment of particular families and neighborhoods.

175 567 191 197 The Negro's almost complete loss of African language heritages is startling at first glance, but slavery as practised in the United States made any other outcome impossible. In order to accommodate the slave to the routine of plantation life, as well as in the interest of discipline and order, the planters saw to it that new Negroes were distributed so as to work with seasoned slaves. This broke up tribal bonds and made difficult the survival of Africanisms. The learning of English was a practical necessity. It was the only medium of linguistic exchange. Only thus could the slave understand his overseer, converse with his fellows, and comprehend the interesting things which took place about him. So thorough was the language substitution that there now remains only a handful of words which are indisputably of African origin and which have attained to a respectable degree of diffusion.

000 American white speech areas—New England, Northern, Western, Southern, etc.—owe their origin to the dialects of England.[7] Characteristics of Southern speech, for

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[7] Only recently was it realised that this is true. American scholars have been in the habit of supposing that our dialect areas represent different stages in the development of standard English in England. But there was really no standard three hundred years ago except among the literary and court people. Even today there are places in England where standard English has made little difference

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FOLK TALES

The folk stories of St. Helena Island represent several 538
different heritages. Undoubtedly the majority of the 171
stories were brought there by Negroes, but not all of them are native African stories. Some appear to have been carried from the Iberian Peninsula or from the Cape Verde Islands by sailors to West Africa, whence they were brought by the Negroes to the United States. Others are of Asiatic descent, having been taken into Africa long before the slave trade began. Still others were European tales learned by the Negroes in the West Indies and brought by them into the Southern States when they were sold to the early planters on the Carolina and Georgia coast. Added to these are European tales brought over by the English settlers or imported more recently by other Europeans. The culture of the sea-island Negroes is, therefore, singularly rich in folk stories.

As Mrs. Parsons has pointed out, there is a close kinship, not only in type of story and subject matter, but in dialect and idiom, between the St. Helena tales and
the folk stories told by the Negroes of the Bahamas. The 538
relationship is not accidental, for there was a cross-migra- 171
tion between the Bahamas and the Southern colonies. 175
West Indian and other island planters are known to 567
have moved to South Carolina and Georgia, bringing slaves with them, and in the early plantation days in these colonies, the planters preferred the seasoned slaves of the West Indies over the raw Africans. On the other hand, the turn of political events in the American colonies caused some, particularly the United Loyalists, to move to the Bahamas and other islands, taking their households with them.

175 indigo. The five who raised indigo made a net profit
249 of $225 more than the five who cultivated cotton.
In 1845 Thomas W. Glover, of Orangeburgh, wrote for the *Report on the Geology of South Carolina* a detailed statement concerning the cultivation and manufacture of indigo.[18] South Carolina indigo was then selling from 40 to 80 cents a pound, and the average production varied from twenty-nine to sixty pounds an acre.

The cultivation of indigo, however, was a precarious undertaking. The soil had to be well prepared before planting; the furrows weeded thoroughly; the caterpillars kept off the plants; the stalks cut with a special kind of hook and handled cautiously in being carried to the vats to prevent the bluish bloom from being rubbed off the leaves; the fermentation closely watched; and the introduction of lime water carefully regulated to produce the best quality of dye. After one had painstakingly watched over his crop from the preparation of the soil to the daily turning of the squares of paste in the drying house, he might even then lose his entire output by its sweating and rotting in the barrels.

Nevertheless, sea-island planters were willing to take the risk as long as Great Britain was paying a bounty, for an acre of virgin land often produced about eighty pounds
175 of good indigo. "One slave may manage Two Acres and
upwards," wrote Governor Glen, "and raise Provisions be-
567 sides, and have all the Winter Months to saw Lumber and
461 be otherwise employed in."[19] Thus the production of

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[18] M. Tuomey, *Report on the Geology of South Carolina*, pp. xxiii-xxiv. A writer in *DeBow's Review* for 1850, (VIII, 495), also urges the cultivation of indigo.

[19] Carroll, *Historical Collections*, II, 204-205.

indigo on St. Helena Island did not interrupt the manufacture of naval stores which was the first occupation of the settlers. After the indigo crop had been laid by, the slaves were employed in "sawing Lumber and making Hogsheads and other Staves, to supply the Sugar Colonies." Indigo culture fitted in so well with the accustomed regime of the settlers that they continued to raise it despite the uncertain returns.

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INTRODUCTION OF SEA-ISLAND COTTON

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The Revolution virtually cut off the market for indigo and, of course, put an end to the British bounty. The steeping vats had for a long time been considered an additional menace to health in this already unhealthy region.[17] At the same time a new staple, sea-island cotton, which offered fabulous profits, began to be raised in the tidewater region. The seed known in Georgia and South Carolina as sea-island cotton came from the Bahama Islands where it had been introduced by the Board of Trade from Anguilla, an island of the Caribbean Sea.

Several Georgia planters experimented with the seed in 1786, among whom were Thomas Spalding and Alexander Bisset whose plants although sturdy did not ripen pods. Two years later, however, Alexander Bisset exported the first bag of sea-island cotton grown in the United States.[18] To the gratified surprise of the Georgia planters, the fruit yielded a finer fiber than that grown in

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[17] *Southern Agriculturist*, Feb., 1828. William Elliott, in his article on indigo, states that he will not admit that the steeping vats "impair the health of the country until I can find that our country has become healthier since the Indigo culture has been superseded by that of Cotton. But I readily admit, that the steeping vats must be unpleasant in those sections where the settlements are thick."

[18] Whitemarsh B. Seabrook, *Memoir on the Origin, Cultivation and Uses of Cotton*, pp. 18, 19; *DeBow's Review*, I, 304.

175 464 248 the seed cotton for market as follows: one dryer; one turner and one feeder of the whipper; thirty assorters, grading fifty pounds each a day; twelve ginners, preparing twenty-five pounds of lint each a day; seven moters at forty-three pounds each; a packer and a re-inspector. Estimating the services of each slave at 50 cents a day, Seabrook concluded that it cost a planter $27 to gin a bale of sea-island cotton.[24] On the average plantation it required from fifty to sixty days of labor to cultivate and gin a bale of fine cotton.[25]

175 464 (567) In the production of naval stores, the cultivation of indigo, and the growth of the long staple cotton, planters soon learned that their most urgent need was a larger labor supply than the sparsely settled province could afford. They turned for this supply to the African slave market.

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[24] Seabrook, *Memoir on the Origin, Cultivation and Uses of Cotton*, p. 31.

[25] Allston, *Essay on Sea Coast Crops*, p. 15.

CHAPTER III

THE LABORERS AND THE LAND

PLANTERS coming to South Carolina from Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, and St. Kitts brought with them the idea of the plantation regime with slavery as the basis of the labor system. In 1682 Samuel Wilson, writing an account of Carolina for the Lords Proprietors as an advertisement designed to attract settlers, spoke of the necessity of slaves in the province, "without which a Planter can never do any great matter."[1] 175 567 464

PRE-REVOLUTIONARY SLAVE TRADE

Prior to 1730 the accessible data concerning the slave trade in South Carolina are scanty, but the enactment of numerous laws laying a duty on the importation of slaves indicates that the slave population was rapidly increasing.[2] In the years after 1730, the importation of slaves into South Carolina ranged, when the import duty was not prohibitive, from as low as 72 in 1749 to as high as 11,641 in 1773.[3] The trade was carried on by British and South Carolina merchants, and the slave vessels, largely from New England, usually came consigned to a merchant who conducted a general importing trade in Charles Town. The arrival of a cargo brought planters to the sale in great numbers. Henry Laurens, one of the leading slave importers in the province, mentioned a sale in 1755 attended 175 567

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[1] "Account of Carolina," in Salley, *Narratives of Early Carolina*, p. 174.

[2] Elizabeth Donnan, "The Slave Trade Into South Carolina Before the Revolution," *American Historical Review*, XXXIII, 804-828.

[3] Based upon estimates made by Elizabeth Donnan, *op. cit.*, pp. 807-809.

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175 567 by forty or fifty planters from so great a distance as seventy miles from Charles Town.[4]

The price of slaves depended in general upon the economic conditions of the province, although other factors contributed to the general fluctuation of prices which characterized the pre-revolutionary slave market. In 1756 Laurens wrote: "The price of Slaves here while they are imported in moderate numbers is wholly influenced by the values of our Staples, Rice and Indigo, and these have been depreciated much below the prices of last Year, so have the Planters slacked in the purchase of Slaves, lowered the prices and lengthened out the Credit."[5] The price of slaves was so unstable that it seldom remained the same for many months during the year. For instance, in the spring of 1755, Negro men were bringing £260 to £270; in the fall, as high as £330. From 1751 to 1773 the price of prime men varied from £245 to £350. During a frenzied purchase in 1764, *The South-Carolina Gazette* estimated that planters had spent for new Negroes £177,870 sterling, or £1,250,090 currency.[6]

Many planters bought their slaves with cash or with produce but many more bought on credit. The terms of purchase varied as widely as the purchase price. In 1755 Laurens suggested to a correspondent that he ignore "the measure lately adopted in Charles Town, for the sale of Negroes . . . three Months Credit, to Purchasers with Interest from the Date," but instead to "deal with each

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[4] Donnan, *op. cit.*, p. 816, citing Laurens Letter Book, July 31, 1755. In possession of South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 819 n, citing Laurens to Capt. Samuel Linnecar, May 8, 1756.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 822, citing *The South-Carolina Gazette*, June 29, 1765.

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Man who shall require Credit" separately.[7] Merchants encouraged payment in cash or in produce by offering a discount, sometimes as much as 5 per cent, "on all Sums paid down," although to induce a ready sale they advertised occasionally that they would give as much as twelve months credit without interest.

The favorite Negroes of the South Carolina planters were those from Gambia and the Gold Coast, although Negroes from other parts of the African coast were imported and, to encourage their acceptance, were sold at lower prices than the Gambia Negroes. Into the Charles Town market there came cargoes advertised as being from the "winward Coast of Guiney," "the Masse-Congo country," "Cape Mount on the Grain Coast"; there came Negroes from Bassa on the Winward Coast, from Bance Island, from Angola, and "Calabars from Bight," Coromantines, and "healthy young Fantees."

Although merchants, in selling new Negroes, invariably advertised the tribe or the geographic section from which the Negroes came, it is interesting to note that none of these facts was mentioned in selling seasoned slaves. It would seem that tribal differences tended to disappear as the slave became seasoned.[8]

By 1708 the number of slaves almost equalled the number of the whites in the province of South Carolina;[9]

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 814, citing Laurens to Smith and Clifton, May 26, 1755; to Satterthwaite, Inman, and Company, Nov. 22, 1755; to John Lewis Gervais, Feb. 28, 1772.

[8] In this connection see *ibid.*, p. 817n. The writer has noticed the same tendency in advertisements of seasoned slaves in North Carolina and Virginia as well as in South Carolina.

[9] "Sir Nathaniel Johnson's Report to the Council of Trade and Plantations," *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series*, XXIV, 739; also in McCrady, *South Carolina under the Proprietary Government*, pp. 477-481, 723. The estimates of

175 567 by the close of the colonial period the proportion of blacks to whites was almost two to one.[10] The closing of the African slave trade[11] in 1808 by provision of the Constitution in 1787 shut off the supply of new Negroes, but before that time most of the sea-island plantations had become well stocked with slaves. In most cases the internal slave trade and the natural increase of the plantation stock were sufficient to take care of the demand for more laborers in instances of expansion on the sea-island plantations.

THE SLAVE MARKET FOR ST. HELENA ISLAND

The planters on St. Helena Island bought their slaves at the Charleston market in common with other planters in that vicinity, for it was at Charleston that they transacted most of their business. Like other planters, too, they undoubtedly stocked their plantations with slaves from various tribes and various African localities,[12] pre-

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Rev. Samuel Thomas, made in 1706 and based on the number of families connected with the Church of England and the Dissenter meetings in each of the six existing parishes outside of Charles Town, show 3,000 whites and 1,000 Negro Slaves. *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, V, 1131-34.

[10] Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina under the Royal Government, 1719-1776*, p. 807.

[11] In 1787 South Carolina, following the example of other states, passed an act to close the African slave trade in her ports, and by similar acts kept her ports closed for sixteen years, although it was hinted that the inhabitants on the coast and the border smuggled in slaves occasionally. In 1803 the State Legislature reopened the African slave trade, but continued to exclude West Indian Negroes and required that slaves brought in from other states have official certificates of good character.

[12] Frank Moore, (ed.), *Rebellion Record*, III, 309. The reporter for the *New York World* who accompanied the Union troops in the capture of Port Royal, November 7, 1861, said of the slaves on Hilton Head, "Every variety of negro and slave was represented. . . . Darkies of genuine congo physiques, and darkies of the genuine Uncle Tom pattern, darkies young and jubilant, darkies middle-aged, and eager, and gray-haired, solemn-looking fellows. Some appeared mystified and some intelligent."

ferring, perhaps, as did other South Carolina planters, the Gambia and Guiney Negroes. In 1791 a St. Helena planter's wife thought that the consuming interest of the Islanders was to raise more indigo to buy more slaves. The profits of the crop, she said, are "mostly expended in the purchase of Negroes, & nothing is so much coveted as the pleasure of possessing many slaves.—These singularities are inherited from their Fore-Fathers—& many follow so closely in the path thru which their Ancestors trod as to deny themselves the Comforts & conveniences of life."[13]

There are local traditions that St. Helena planters, as well as those of Edisto and other Sea Islands, received fresh supplies of African slaves at their own private wharves after the closing of the slave trade, but no documentary evidence has been found to substantiate these traditions.

The plantation records which have been preserved for the sea-island districts show that planters tended to retain their slaves, sometimes even at great financial sacrifice, selling one only because of repeated insubordination or because of economic distress. In 1867 William Jervey, of Charleston, in attempting to settle the accounts of a plantation on Ladies Island, wrote to a member of the family that "the old gentleman several times had to sell negroes to pay . . . debts."[14]

When it was necessary to sell several Negroes, the planter usually attempted to dispose of them in family groups.[15] Negroes worked better and were more satisfied

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[13] MS letter of Mrs. Gabriel Capers, March 25, 1791.

[14] MS in Sarah W. Ellis Papers, April 20, 1867.

[15] MS, A. F. Gregorie Account Book. A deed of sale dated Jan. 9, 1840, shows that A. F. Gregorie, of Greenwood Plantation, "Delivered to M.r J. E. Moore Mitchell the following Twenty five Negroes viz—

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to make a change of masters when the whole or a part of their families went with them. When Sir Charles Lyell visited Beaufort in 1845, he observed the general unwillingness of planters to sell to Negro traders. If planters are "forced to part with slaves," he wrote, "they usually sell one to another, and are unwilling to dispose of them to a stranger. It is reckoned, indeed, quite a disgrace to a Negro to be discarded. When the former master bids for one of his 'own people,' at a sale of property forced on by debt, the public are unwilling to bid against him."[18] This tendency to retain a slave as long as it was possible to do so often led a planter into inefficiency and oversupply.

EXTENT OF SLAVEHOLDING

The average number of slaves per owner for Beaufort District in 1790 was twenty-four; in 1860, thirty. The average for the district in 1860 was twice as great as the average for the state as a whole. The following table shows the size of slaveholdings in the district in 1790 and in 1860:

Jan. 13th 1840
Sambo & Jenny his wife and their children
Ned
Tyrah
Rhynah
Pilot
Grace
Penny & her son Isaac & Jack
Island George & Bynah his wife
William & Nancy his Sister and her child Bess
Honor Elizabeths Maid
Charles and his Wife Hagar and their son Allen
Robert & his wife Caty & their children Peter
Dunbee, and Caty's sister Dinah & her child
Bess brought back to stay with her Grand Mother Lucy."

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[18] Sir Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States*, I, 233.

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SIZE OF SLAVEHOLDINGS IN BEAUFORT DISTRICT[illegible]

Number of Slaves	Slaveowners			
	Number		Per Cent	
	1790	1860	1790	1860
1 slave	73	78	12.5	7.3
2 and under 5	88	173	15.1	16.1
5 and under 10	95	204	16.2	19.0
10 and under 20	86	188	14.7	17.6
20 and under 50	150	216	25.6	20.2
50 and under 100	69	142	11.8	13.2
100 and under 200	20	51	3.4	4.8
200 and under 300	3	13	0.5	1.3
300 and under 500	0	4	0.0	0.4
500 and under 1,000	1	1	0.2	0.1
Total	585	1,070	100.0	100.0

Although the number of slaveholders in 1860 had increased 83.9 per cent over that of 1790, the distribution in the two periods, according to the size of holdings, did not vary appreciably. In 1790 some 58.5 per cent of the slaveowners had less than twenty slaves and in 1860 only 60 per cent had less than that number, a difference of less than two per cent. In 1790 those owning more than one hundred slaves were 4.1 per cent of the total, while in 1860 they were 6.6 per cent, a difference of 2.5 per cent. The only significant change in the distribution of the size of holdings occurred in the class possessing from twenty to fifty slaves. In 1790 this group was a fourth of the total, but in 1860 it had been reduced to a fifth.

While the general average for the district in 1860 would place every owner in the rank of a planter, it is significant that three-fifths of the slaveholders in the district owned less than twenty slaves. With less than this number a man engaged in the cultivation of sea-island [248]

[illegible] *Agricultural Census, 1860*, p. 237; *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States, 1790: State of South Carolina*, pp. 10-13.

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cotton, the staple crop in 1860, could not hope to engage in large scale production. Only 19.8 per cent owned more than fifty slaves and only one planter owned more than five hundred. The conclusion must be, therefore, that the majority of those engaged in agriculture in this district, one of the most densely populated slave counties in the entire South, belonged to the small planter class.

It is difficult to estimate the exact number of slaves owned by St. Helena planters at any given time.[18] The first census of the United States shows that only four men in Beaufort District, none of whom lived on St. Helena Island, owned more than two hundred slaves in 1790. Frederick Witsell had 607; Thomas Heyward, 265; General Stephen Bull, 233; and John Rutledge (who lived in Charleston), 217. Of those living on St. Helena, the plantation of William Fripp with 153 slaves had the largest number; that of John Jenkins with 136 slaves, the next largest. The other holdings were considerably less. Thomas Chaplin had 65 slaves; William Chaplin, 50; John Chaplin, 30; Paul Fripp, 37; Thomas Fripp, 33; John Fripp, 38; Charles Capers, 45; William Capers, 15; John Cowen, 13; Peter Perry, 45; George Pope, 39.

Early in 1862 Edward L. Pierce, special agent for the United States Treasury Department, estimated that there was an average of forty slaves to a plantation on St.

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[18] The courthouse at Gillisonville, the seat of Beaufort District, was destroyed by Sherman's Army in 1864. Later the county seat was changed to Beaufort, and in 1883 the courthouse there was destroyed by fire. Practically all of the antebellum county records have, therefore, been destroyed. The MS, "Return of Tax Collected by John M. Baker in the Parish of St. Helena for the Year Commencing Oct. 1, 1860" (in possession of William Elliott, Columbia, S. C.), does not contain a list of slaves. This MS is a duplicate of the original which Congressman William Elliott said in a written statement that he deposited in the Court of Claims. A search through some of the files of the Court has failed to reveal the original.

Helena. With the blockade of the coast and the capture of St. Helena Island on November 7, 1861, the planters on the Island left in great haste, in some cases not having time to take even a house servant along. After the hasty departure of their masters, the slaves on Ladies and St. Helena islands quite generally remained on their respective plantations so that Mr. Pierce's estimate included in his "Report to the Secretary of Treasury" of February 3, 1863,[19] closely approximates the number of slaves on the St. Helena plantations during the latter part of the plantation regime.

Mr. Pierce found 260 slaves at Coffin's Point, the plantation of Thomas Aston Coffin, who was generally conceded to have the best managed and the most prosperous plantation on St. Helena. On Dr. William J. Jenkins' plantation he found 130 slaves; on the Eustis plantation on Ladies Island, 120; on the others from 38 to 80 slaves.[20] On the "best peopled" plantations he found an average of eighty-one slaves but a general average, on all plantations, of about fifty-two. This estimate is much higher than the size of slaveholdings of the majority of planters in Beaufort District, for, as the foregoing table indicates, 60 per cent of the owners in the district possessed less than twenty slaves in 1860.

The price of slaves increased with the advancing years of the ante-bellum period until in 1859 the average price of prime field hands reached about $1,900.[21] In some instances prime men sold for almost three thousand dollars.

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[19] *Rebellion Record*, I, 302-315.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 303.

[21] Phillips, *American Negro Slavery*, p. 374. For the advance in prices and an explanation of the causes see *ibid.*, pp. 359-401.

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
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The prices in Beaufort District, and, therefore, on St. Helena Island, followed closely the prices at Charleston, which were uniformly above the Virginia market but below that of New Orleans. The following table represents the investment in slaves of one planter in Beaufort District about 1860, James Gregorie, of Greenwood plantation. The prices may be taken as an average of prices for the district, and the proportion of prime hands, those valued at more than $1,000, to the entire holding as the average for the district.

VALUE OF SLAVES ON GREENWOOD PLANTATION IN 1860[27]

Value in dollars	Number	Per Cent
None	15	10.4
1-100	1	0.7
100-200	9	6.3
200-300	6	4.2
300-400	12	8.3
400-500	16	11.1
500-600	4	2.8
600-700	10	6.9
700-800	12	8.3
800-900	26	18.0
900-1,000	7	4.9
1,000-2,000	25	17.4
2,000	1	0.7
Total	144	100.0

Mr. Gregorie estimated the market value of his 144 slaves in 1860 to be $85,450. The average value of all his slaves was $593.40,[28] but the average price of the saleable slaves was $662.40. Fifty per cent of them would bring on the market something more than seven hundred dollars; while ten per cent had no market value whatever and

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[27] MS in Gregorie Papers.

[28] Gregorie's estimate is probably too high. James Hamilton Couper, of Hopeton plantation, Glynn County, Ga., estimated the average price of the more than five hundred slaves on the plantation under his management to be $450.

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were merely a liability to the owner. All slaves listed as worth more than a thousand dollars were men. Besides Solomon whose value was estimated at $2,000, there were Andrew at $1,500; Dublin, Israel, Sampson, Ben, Solomon, and Cato, at $1,200; John Cox, Phil, Toney, Quamina, and Buff, at $1,100; and John, Chester, Joseph, Jupiter, Paris, Frank, Pompey, Daniel, Hector, Richard, Jacob, Sam, and Abraham, at an even $1,000. Prime women who could go to the field and turn out as much work as a man were most often listed at $800, although a few, Beck, Sally, and Nanny, would bring $900. Thus, out of 144 slaves, the Greenwood plantation had about fifty-nine prime hands in 1860.

SIZE OF ST. HELENA PLANTATIONS

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The exact number of plantations on St. Helena Island at the close of the plantation regime is difficult to determine, because the planters themselves were not always consistent in designating the same tracts as separate plantations. It sometimes happened, as in the cases of Captain John Fripp and Dr. William J. Jenkins, that a planter owned several tracts at various places on the Island which he operated as distinct plantations, but in paying his taxes he grouped all of his tracts as one large holding. The number of separate tracts was about fifty-four[24] as far as can be determined by statements made by the owners themselves, or their heirs, some thirty years after the close of the plantation regime; and the number of landholders, the year. Cotton was planted from about March 20 to April 10; corn about April 1; and sweet potatoes the latter part of March. The routine of labor on a sea-island cotton plantation from planting time until the crops were laid by is illustrated by that on John Fripp's Bluff plantation of 560 acres as recorded in his plantation book for 1856. The spring of this year was cold and wet so that Fripp was late in putting in his crops. 248

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[24] Petitions filed in the Court of Claims under the Compensation Act of 1891. Edward L. Pierce, special agent for the United States Government, listed the number of plantations at fifty. *Rebellion Record*, I, 303. This number includes Morgan, Coosaw, Datha, Wassaw, Pine, and Polowana islands, small islands separated from St. Helena Island by creeks.

He did his first planting on March 20 and 21 when he banked and planted four acres of potatoes. The weather prevented his planting again until April 7 when he put in the rest of his potatoes, two more acres. On the tenth he commenced banking and planting cotton, and by the sixteenth he had put in thirty-eight acres which he recorded were doing "fine." Three days later he began putting in the corn crop and planted that day eighteen acres in the "Savannah swamp field." On the twenty-second he planted twenty-three acres of cotton in the "Marsh field." A week later he commenced the regular corn crop and by the first of May had planted in all sixty-three acres. The next day he planted twelve more acres of cotton in the swamp field and on May 3 put in three-fourths of an acre of rice in the small fresh water ponds by "Point field." On the twelfth and thirteenth he finished planting cotton, making a total of 121 acres.

The hands were busy hoeing cotton from that time until the twenty-second of May when they stopped to put in fifteen acres of "Shinney Peas." Two days later Fripp detailed a few hands to put in an acre of rice near the swamp field. All hands resumed cotton hoeing until July 5 when Fripp began to plant the first of his potato slips. 248
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248 From then until August a few hands put in a half acre or
464 less a day, planting in all sixteen acres of potatoes. Work
on the cotton crop stopped about the middle of July.
● 567 Fripp finished planting about the first of September when
he had two acres of potato slips put in for seed and three-fourths of an acre of turnip seed sown.

By November 29 he had gathered and finished "breaking in" the corn crop, having made 650 bushels, less than 12 bushels to the acre. By December 9 he had finished digging potatoes, having made a poor crop, and four days later he had gathered all the cotton. On December 13 the hands began processing the cotton and did not finish ginning the crop of thirty-five bales until February 12, just in time to begin listing the soil in preparation for drilling in the cotton seed a few weeks later. During the slack periods, the hands had been engaged in digging and hauling marsh mud to manure the fields, cutting marsh grass for fodder and also for fertilizer, cutting and sawing wood, and ditching fields.[1]

248 St. Helena Island planters, as a rule, obtained the
simplest of farm implements for their laborers. Most of
(412) the work in cultivating sea-island cotton was done with the
175 hoe. In 1822 there was not a plough or scythe on Edisto,
one of the best cultivated of the Sea Islands. The largest
248 plantations had only two or three carts; the use of oxen
407 was unknown.[2] By 1844 nearly every plantation on the
493 island had a cart and mule or yoke of oxen to every six
taskable hands. At the close of the ante-bellum period, however, John F. Townsend was the only planter who

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[1] MS, John E. Fripp, Bluff Plantation Book.

[2] Seabrook, *Memoir on the Cultivation of Cotton*, p. 25.

These reclaimed tracts often proved very fertile so that in the later ante-bellum period, a few sea-coast planters quite generally engaged in draining and embanking marshes and swamps. In 1844 Mr. Seabrook, of Edisto, thought that the immense tracts of unreclaimed swamps "which lie along the line where the salt and fresh water meet . . . are capable of yielding an amount of cotton wool equal to the yearly exports of the State."[16]

MARSH MUD AND SEA-ISLAND COTTON

A few planters fertilized their cotton fields soon after the introduction of the new staple; in fact, all the materials used as manure in the later ante-bellum period were employed as early as 1805 in a limited way by some sea-island planters, but it was not until 1825 that the methods of manuring became generally known.

Planters found that salt-marsh[17] mud which was within easy reach of most of the cotton fields, was the cheapest and one of the most profitable manures that they could obtain. It was usually applied to the soil at the rate of about forty-one cart loads to the acre. Planters employed various methods of adding it to their fields. On Edisto Island most of them preferred to use it as soon as dug. The Whaley plantation on Little Edisto was divided into halves, each half being planted in alternate years. Slaves went out in boats on the creeks and rivers [567]
to the nearby marshes, loaded their boats with the mud, and returned to empty it in ox-carts or hand-woven baskets

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[17] The term "saltmarsh" was used on the coast to apply to the mud and other matters of which the marsh is composed.

[567] to be "toted" to the fields by other slaves.[18] The mud was then listed in. On the John F. Townsend plantation it was plowed in, but Mr. Townsend was the only man on the island who used plows to any extent.

Some planters dried the mud before spreading it upon the land. Tuomey's *Geological Survey of South Carolina* of 1848 recommends charring the mud to diminish its weight so that it might be transported profitably some distance up the rivers and so that it would fix the volatile products of decomposition on being added to a barn-yard manure heap.[19] Other planters made a compost[20] of the mud. R. F. W. Allston, writing in 1854 on the sea-coast crops, stated that the usual compost was prepared in summer "by mixing with farm-yard, cowpen and stable litter, salt marsh, marsh mud, and even salt."[21] It was applied to the land in winter at the rate of forty, fifty, and seventy cart loads. He considered that the best method of using this compost was, first, to prepare the land in the autumn by listing in the remaining growth as soon as the crop had been picked, even before the cotton had been prepared for market, and then in the spring to make a bed on the autumn listing by drawing up with a hoe the earth which had been well manured in the winter with the marsh-mud compost.

The proportion of marsh mud to barnyard manure used in this compost was based upon the character of the

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[18] J. Swinton Whaley, "The History of Sea-Island Cotton." Unpublished manuscript.

[19] Tuomey, *Geology of South Carolina*, p. 232.

(113) [20] For a discussion of composts see F. A. Procher, "Report on Manures," in *Southern Agriculturist*, new ser., V, no. I, 1-13; Turner, *Cotton Planter's Manual*, pp. 70-80, 85-93.

[21] Allston, *Essay on Sea Coast Crops*, p. 13.

having assumed management in 1802, finding the gang 000
good, but "very disorderly which is invariably the case when there is a frequent change of managers."[9] Later his son succeeded him.

Louis Manigault, after having made only half a crop due to his new overseer's inexperience, wrote, "He says 'he will do better another year, that now he sees into it,' and as is well known, 'Never change an Overseer if You can help it.' We try him once (but only once) more."[10] But he proved no better the second year than the first. "Elated by a strong and very false religious feeling he began to injure the plantation a vast deal, placing himself on 466 567
a par with the Negroes, by even joining in with them at their prayer meetings, breaking down long established discipline, which in every Case is so difficult to preserve, favouring and siding in any difficulty with the people, against the Drivers, besides causing numerous grievances."[11] And so Manigault was forced to look for a new overseer.

ORGANIZATION OF SLAVE LABOR

Planters learned early in the use of slave labor that 466
it was necessary to give certain trusted Negroes limited 464
authority over the others so that with a change of over- 567
seers the plantation routine might be disturbed as little as possible. On the large plantations the seasoned Negroes trained the new ones and were responsible for their behaviour. In the early days of the plantation regime, when a gang of fresh Africans was purchased, they were assigned

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[9] R. King, Jr., "On the Management of the Butler Estate," *Southern Agriculturist*, Dec., 1828. (113)

[10] Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 143.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

466 in groups to certain reliable slaves who initiated them into
● 567 the ways of the plantation. These drivers, as they were
called, had the right of issuing or withholding rations to
464 the raw recruits and of inflicting minor punishments.
They taught the new slaves to speak the broken English which they knew and to do plantation work which required little skill, gathering oyster shells to be burned for making lime, mixing concrete from sand, lime, and shells, cutting wood, and ditching fields. At the end of a year, the master or overseer for the first time directed the work of the new Negro who now had become "tamed," assigning him to a special task of plantation work along with the other seasoned hands who had long since learned to obey orders, to arise when the conch blew at "day clean," to handle a hoe in listing and banking, to stand still when a white man spoke.

The planter usually divided his hands into four classes: drivers, tradesmen, house servants, and field hands. The number of drivers on a plantation depended upon its size. Only the largest of the St. Helena plantations had as many as two. It was the driver's business to superintend generally the field hands, and he carried a small club or whip as his "wand of office." He issued rations; he saw that each laborer's task was properly performed; and he inflicted corporal punishment whenever he saw fit, always, however, subject to the overseer's or master's order. In the absence of the overseer or owner, the driver usually succeeded to much of their authority, and in many cases knew more about the details of plantation affairs than the owner himself. For instance, when St. Helena Island was captured by Federal troops in 1861,

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the drivers quite generally remained at home issuing 466
rations and directing the work of the plantation. 567

R. King, Jr., overseer of the Butler estate, thought 464
that the selection of drivers was one of the "grand points" in plantation management. A cruel driver could demoralize the whole plantation, while an honest one could keep the slaves busy and happy. "An order from a driver," he said in explaining his method of plantation discipline, "is to be as implicity obeyed as if it came from myself, nor do I counteract the execution, (unless directly injurious,) . . . It would be endless for me to superintend the drivers and field hands too, and would of course make them useless."[12] Miss Harriet Ware, a missionary to St. Helena Island in 1862, described Limus, a driver on one of the St. Helena plantations, as being "very smart" and easy to learn. "He has the energy and *cuteness* and big eye for his own advantage of a born New Englander. He is not very moral or scrupulous, and the church-members will tell you 'not yet,' with a smile, if you ask whether he belongs to them. But he leads them all in enterprise, and his ambition and consequent prosperity make his example a very useful one on the plantation."[13]

Next to the driver in importance and authority were 567
the tradesmen and the house servants. While the num- 463

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[12] *Southern Agriculturist*, Dec. 1828. "But the grand point [in managing the Butler estate] was to suppress the brutality and licentiousness practiced by the principal men on it; (say the drivers and tradesmen). More punishment is inflicted on every plantation by the men in power from private pique, than from a neglect of duty. . . . The driver to screen favourites, or apply their time to his own purposes, imposes a heavy tax on some. Should they murmur, an opportunity is taken, months after, to punish those unfortunate fellows for not doing their own and other tasks. . . . As an evidence of the various opportunities that a brutal driver has to gratify his revenge, . . . let any planter go into his field, and in any Negro's task he can find apparently just grounds for punishment."

[13] *Letters from Port Royal*, pp. 37-38.

567 ber of tradesmen on a plantation depended upon the size
463 of the slaveholding and the plantation economy of the
owner, every planter on St. Helena Island who owned as
335 many as thirty slaves had at least one tradesman, usually a
carpenter. Sometimes the planter had a head carpenter
and several subordinates. The Trescot house on Barnwell
Island near St. Helena, which had just been completed at
the outbreak of the Civil War, was built entirely by Trescot's own carpenters, such work as window sashes and
panellings being done in Charleston.[14]

567 The carpenter did the building and repair work of
the plantation, and when work was slack at home he was
335 usually hired out to neighboring plantations or to some
reliable person in Beaufort or Charleston. For instance,
in August, 1841, Miss Mary B. Elliott, of Beaufort, paid
$69.50 "to Mrs. Oswald's York for carpenter work."[15]
In 1851 H. M. Stuart, of Beaufort, paid Joe $19 for
plastering a room and $1.50 for mending a chimney.[16]
[554] Thus, some of the plantation tradesmen exercised as many
liberties as free Negroes, and they commanded a position
of respect among their fellow slaves. Miss Laura M.
[797] Towne, a missionary to St. Helena during the Civil War,
found Will, a cabinet-maker on one of the Capers plantations, "very discontented because he was ordered to the
field, there being no work at his own trade to do." He
567 was able to read and was "very intelligent and self-re-
463 specting."[17] Sir Charles Lyell, who visited James Ham-
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[14] William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South*, p. 145. Congressman William Elliott took this house down in 1876, floated it to the town of Beaufort, and erected it just as it had been on Barnwell Island. The house is now owned and occupied by Dr. M. G. Elliott.

[15] Elliott Account Book.

[16] Stuart Receipt Book.

[17] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 27.

ilton Couper's Hopeton plantation in 1841, was agreeably 567
surprised to see the rank held there by the black mechanics. 463
"When these mechanics come to consult Mr. Couper on 554
business," he wrote, "their manner of speaking to him is [466]
quite as independent as that of English artisans to their employers."[18]

Besides the tradesmen, Edward L. Pierce, in 1862 567
found on the St. Helena Island plantations among the 463
group of laborers "more intelligent than the average," plowmen, watchmen, and religious leaders. Each plantation also had its stock minder who attended to the breeding and care of the stock; and on the better managed plantations, its poultry minder as well. The stock minder frequently served also as coachman for the overseer's family, while the coachman for the planter's family was usually one of the house servants.

Negroes unable to do a full day's work, "quarter 567
hands," "half hands," and "three-quarter hands," usually 357
performed the house work. For instance, the usual house servants on Henry A. Middleton's Weehaw plantation near Georgetown were "a cook that is not a full task[,] a girl of twelve, a boy of fourteen."[19] An old woman did the gardening for the overseer's family, and an old man attended to the overseer's and the owner's horses and served as coachman for the overseer. The house servants attached to the planter's family went back and forth with the family from the plantation to the summer house.

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[18] Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States*, I, 267.

[19] Henry A. Middleton, Jr., Weehaw Plantation Book. In possession of Langdon Cheves, Charleston, S. C.

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THE TASK SYSTEM

464 567 Less than half of a planter's total number of laborers could usually be counted upon for a full day's work.

When Captain Basil Hall visited the United States in 1827 and 1828 he found on a sea-island plantation on St. Simon's Island, Georgia, 122 slaves. Of these, seventy were men and women between the ages of fourteen and fifty; forty-eight were children under the age of fourteen; and four were superannuated. The seventy workers were classified as follows: thirty-nine full hands, sixteen three-quarter hands, eleven half hands, and four quarter hands. (463) (359) Out of seventy persons, therefore, the planter had fifty-seven and a half "taskable hands," but those working in the fields were only forty-four taskables, while the other thirteen and a half were employed as cart drivers, nurses, cooks for the Negroes, carpenters, house servants, and stock minders.[20]

The number of taskable hands on a plantation varied from year to year. Children were not sent to the field until they were fourteen, but were put to work at minor jobs, pulling weeds, "minding child," picking up trash, washing dishes. Superannuated slaves were also given tasks calling for little physical exertion; such as, gardening, tending horses, nursing, sewing. *Enceinte* women did half tasks until confinement, and women with suckling babies also did half task until the child was eight months old. A slave who had been sick did a portion of a task until he had sufficiently recovered to resume his accustomed amount of work.

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[20] Captain Basil Hall, *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828*, II, 229.

The basis of work on a sea-island cotton plantation was 567
the task. In time the term came to signify a quarter of an 461
acre laid out 105 by 105 feet. The acre was laid out 248
square, 210 by 210 feet. A day's work for a full hand de- (804)
pended upon the time of year and the kind of work he was doing. When listing, the full hand's task was a quarter of an acre. Listing was the first process of preparing the land for cotton after the field had been manured, and consisted of hoeing the grass off the old bed into the alleys. Next the old beds were hauled on top at the rate of a quarter of an acre a day to the full hand. When a [407]
plow was used, as it seldom was, the hands followed with hoes, finishing off the beds at the rate of three tasks a day, or three-fourths of an acre. A plowman's allotment was usually four tasks, or an acre a day.

When the bed had been made, two hands made holes the width of the hoe cross-wise on the top of it at intervals of about eighteen inches. Another hand followed, scattering ten or fifteen seeds in each hole, while two other hands covered them to a depth of about an inch and a half, patting the soil down. Since this was light work the day's assignment in this process was usually three tasks.

A day's work at hoeing after the cotton came up was ordinarily two tasks. Picking, which was done generally by the women and children, was accomplished at the rate of about ninety to a hundred pounds a day for a full hand. The task at assorting was from thirty to fifty pounds of seed cotton a day, at ginning from twenty to thirty pounds a day, at moting from thirty to fifty pounds a day.

The tasks involved in plantation work as laid down 567
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567 for Weehaw plantation near Georgetown, which were also
461 observed on St. Helena plantations, were as follows:[21]

241 Corn: Sowing done in gang. Covering done in gang.
  Hoeing ¼ acre Hauling up ½ acre.
  Plowing corn 2½ to 3 acres; a man & mule will tend 30 acres. Stripping fodder ¾ acre on first day—after that strip 1 acre & carry home that of the previous day.

Potatoes & Slips:
  Planting—3 [hands] in a ¼ acre, who also bed it up.
  Hoeing—2 in a ¼ acre. Hauling up 20 Compass.[22]
  Digging slips—men, 5 rows—Women, 4 rows & carry home.
  Digging roots for allowance—5 to 7 rows, as they bear.
  Weeding is usually done by the shufflers.[23]

Peas: 3 hands to 3 acres when planted between corn.
  Harvesting—2 large blankets.

Ditching . . . 6 to 8 tasks. Spreading straw[24]—if wet ½ acre. if dry ¾ acre. Listing in straw—½ acre.

Getting task stakes, 500 to a hand[25]

Splitting Rails—100 Rails 12 ft long & heavy

Cutting Wood—1 cord. . . .

Splitting garden railings—500 to 3 men. . . .

Cutting down & piling up corn stalks, 1 to 1¼ to 1½ acres.

Digging ditches . . . —600 cubic feet.

The tasks at cutting marsh grass and digging marsh mud for fertilizing the fields were estimated by the cart load and varied with the weather and the distance of the marsh from the field.

(804)

[21] Henry A. Middleton, Jr., Weehaw Plantation Book.

[22] A compass was five feet as measured by a wooden triangle called a compass.

[23] Children or superannuated men and women.

[24] On St. Helena plantations marsh grass was used instead of the rice straw spread on the Weehaw fields.

[25] Each hand's task was staked off.

SLAVE RATIONS

The amount and type of rations which were issued to the hands varied with the plantation. For instance, four different plantations on Edisto Island observed the following practices.[26] One plantation master issued to each hand one bushel of potatoes a week from about October 1 to February 1, and then one peck of corn, ground or unground as preferred, or one peck of broken rice. The owner gave out meat occasionally. On another plantation the rations were: one bushel of potatoes, or ten quarts of corn meal, or eight quarts of rice and four quarts of peas. In addition to this, the slaves, numbering 170, were allowed during the year twenty barrels of salt fish, two barrels of molasses, and fresh meat occasionally. On a third plantation the diet was varied by a weekly ration of a half bushel of potatoes, six quarts of meal, and twenty-one pounds of fresh meat, or ten quarts of meal or rice. A fourth plantation gave out, in addition to the usual half bushel of potatoes, a quart of vegetable soup once a day during hard labor and twice a week at all other times.

In 1862 Edward L. Pierce reported that the customary rations issued by St. Helena planters were a peck of corn a week to each hand and meat at Christmas and in June when work was hardest.[27] While a few plantations allowed meat only at Christmas, a few others dealt it out as often as once a month or once a fortnight. Some plantations also gave molasses and sugar occasionally. Children were allowed from two to six quarts of corn a week, the amount varying with the age of the child. Edward S. Philbrick, one of the Government's superintendents of

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[26] Turner, *Cotton Planter's Manual*, p. 134.

[27] Pierce, "Report," in *Rebellion Record*, sup., I, 310.

567 plantations in 1862, reported that Thomas A. Coffin gave
262 his 250 slaves twelve beeves in summer and four at Christmas, four barrels of molasses in summer, and from April to June, when work was heavy, two pecks of corn and two and a half pounds of bacon per slave.[28] He also regularly
(263) gave every hand a quart of salt a month and every man
(276) two "hands" of tobacco a month and four "hands" at Christmas.

(226) In addition to the rations issued by the master, the slave might gather from the plantation creeks and rivers all the oysters and crabs which he desired. The practice in regard to the fish varied with the plantations, as will be
567 indicated later.[29] Each family was also given a small
241 patch of ground, about one task, back of the cabin to cultivate as desired. Most families planted three or four rows of corn and put the rest in potatoes. They ate part of
567 the corn, but fed most of it to the pig and chickens which
231 each hand was permitted to keep. Some planters on St. Helena even permitted their Negroes to have cattle. Nor did the hands usually eat their stock and poultry, but sold it to the master or to the island storekeeper or to merchants in Beaufort.

567 When Captain Basil Hall visited a plantation on St.
432 Simon's Island in 1828, he found that the master's family was supplied entirely with poultry and eggs by his Ne-
(435) groes at these prices: eggs, 12½ cents a dozen; chickens, 12½ cents each; fowls, 20 to 25 cents each; ducks, 50 cents each.[30] They were given the liberty to carry their produce to a better market if they could find one. With

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[28] MS in Port Royal Correspondence. In Archives of U. S. Treasury Department.
[29] *Infra*, p. 142.
[30] Hall, *Travels in North America*, II, 232.

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the money thus obtained they bought extra clothing, coffee, sugar, and what was with them the chief necessity of life, tobacco.[31]

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R. W. Roper estimated in 1844, in an address delivered in Columbia, S. C., before the State Agricultural Society, that it cost a planter $11.52 annually to feed a slave.[32] His estimate was based upon the following rations: twelve bushels of corn at 50 cents a bushel, twelve quarts of salt at 1 cent a quart, two pounds of bacon a week at 4½ cents a pound, and twelve pounds of tobacco a year at 6 cents a pound. While the prices quoted in 1844 were, of course, not the same for each year of the ante-bellum period, they approximated fairly closely the general average.

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Clothing cost the planter considerably less. St. Helena planters ordinarily allowed each slave two suits a year, one for summer and another for winter. Thomas A. Coffin, of Coffin's Point plantation, gave out in April for every 200 hands 500 yards of men's blue cotton cloth, like the material used in workmen's clothes in the North, 600 yards of coarse unbleached cotton shirting for the men, 600 yards of the same material for women's underclothes, 600 yards of calico in gay colors for frocks, 100 handkerchief pieces, and 100 straw hats for men. In November he issued 550 yards of stout woolen cloth for men's clothes and 600 yards of thinner woolen for women, 1,200 yards of unbleached cloth for shirts and underclothes, 100 turban handkerchiefs for the women, 100 warm caps for the men; 200 pairs of shoes, and 67 blankets of assorted sizes. The house servants got hose and flannels in addition to

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[31] Pierce, "Report," *Rebellion Record*, sup., I, 310.

[32] R. W. Roper, "Address," *Southern Agriculturist*, new ser., V, no. 3, p. 89.

567 291 these supplies,[33] and the drivers four suits a year, instead of the usual two suits received by field hands.

Roper estimated that the average yearly cost of cloth- 567 291 435 ing was $6.12 a slave as follows: six yards of woolens at 55 cents a yard, six yards of summer homespun at 10 cents a yard, a pair of shoes at 90 cents, a hat, cap, or handkerchief at 25 cents, a blanket every three years at $4 a blanket, and needles, thread, buttons, and trimmings at 24 cents a year.[34] This estimate brought the average cost of food and clothing to $17.64 a slave.[35]

567 435 Upon adding to this estimate the expense of providing a house, medical care, and incidentals, one finds that the cost to the master amounted to a little less than $50. When it is remembered that two or more slaves were fed and clothed for every taskable hand, it will be seen that the cost per hand ran between $75 and $100 a year, equivalent to wages of about $7 or $8 a month. In 1860 a day 465 laborer was receiving in South Carolina 82 cents a day without board and a farm hand $11.37 a month with board, only a few dollars more than it cost a planter to maintain each taskable hand.[36] When it is considered that 567 433 slaves, unskilled and often poorly supervised, cultivated only six acres to the hand, it will be seen that the plantation operated not only at a low wage level, but also at a low level of efficiency.

567 342 The type of houses provided for the slaves varied with the plantation management, as did every other phase of the plantation routine. When Timothy Ford, of Morris

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[33] MS in Port Royal Correspondence.

[34] Roper, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[35] Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 135. Louis Manigault, of Argyle Island, estimated that food and clothing for 1838 cost him about $21 a slave.

[36] *U. S. Census of Mortality and Miscellaneous Statistics*, 1860, p. 512.

Town, New Jersey, visited Beaufort and the neighboring 567
Sea Islands in 1785 he recorded in his diary, "The planters 342
all fix at a distance from the road with avenues cut through
the woods leading up to their houses. The Negro houses 567
are laid out like a camp & sometimes resemble one."[37] 342
The Negro quarters, or "nigger-house yard," or "nigger 361
street," as they were variously called, did, indeed, re-
semble a camp spread out a quarter of a mile back of the
master's or overseer's house. Edward L. Pierce in 1862
described the houses of the field hands on St. Helena Is-
land as being "ranged in a row, sometimes in two rows
fronting each other. They are 16 feet by 12, each appro- 567
priated to a family, and in some cases divided with a parti- 342
tion. They numbered on the plantations visited 10 to 12,
and on the Coffin plantation they are doubled, numbering
23 double houses intended for 46 families."[38] Later he
reported that on some of the plantations the cabins were
"ill-conditioned being without chimneys,"[39] so that when
there was a fire inside, the occupants were engulfed by a
great cloud of smoke. In 1862 Miss Laura M. Towne de-
scribed the quarters on the Eddings Point plantation, the
Edgar Fripp plantation, and on one of the Jenkins planta-
tions as "wretched hovels" with wooden chimneys and gen-
eral squalor.[40] Later in the same year Charles P. Ware, [797]
another missionary to St. Helena Island, found the houses
on the McTureous plantation "terribly out of repair, with
wooden chimneys and mud floors."[41]

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[37] Joseph W. Barnwell (ed.), "Diary of Timothy Ford, 1785-1786," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XIII, 145.

[38] Pierce, "Report," in *Rebellion Records*, sup., I, 304.

[39] MS in Port Royal Correspondence, E. L. Pierce to S. P. Chase, April 1, 1862.

[40] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 57.

[41] *Port Royal Letters*, p. 77.

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567 William Howard Russell, who visited Barnwell Is-
342 land in April, 1861, several months before the capture of
the region by the Federal Army, has left a vivid picture
of the Negro quarters on the Trescot plantation:

> [361] The huts stand in a row, like a street, each detached with a
> (235) poultry-house of rude planks behind it. . . . No attempt at any
> drainage or any convenience existed near them, and the same re-
> mark applies to very good houses of white people in the south.
> [364] Heaps of oyster shells, broken crockery, old shoes, rags, and
> feathers were found near each hut. The huts were all alike win-
> dowless, and the apertures, intended to be glazed some fine day,
> were generally filled up with a deal of board. The roofs were
> shingled, and the whitewash which had once given the settlement
> an air of cleanliness, was now only to be traced by patches which
> had escaped the action of the rain.[42]

Captain Basil Hall, another English visitor to the United States, found the quarters on Edisto Island at a much earlier date, "uncommonly neat and comfortable." He thought the "cottages" might "have shamed those of many countries" he had visited. Each was "divided into small rooms or compartments, fitted with regular bed places"; all had chimneys and doors, and some, though only a few, possessed the luxury of windows. There was one cabin to every five persons.[43] In 1846 Sir Charles Lyell described the Negro houses on Butler's Island as "neat, and whitewashed, all floored with wood, each with an apartment called the hall, two sleeping rooms, and a loft for the children." On Hopeton plantation he found the Negro houses "as neat as the greater part of the cot-

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[42] Russell, *My Diary North and South*, pp. 146-147.

[43] Hall, *Travels in North America in 1827 and 1828*, II, 210, 211.

tages in Scotland." In each was a chest, a table, two or 567 342
three chairs, and a few shelves for crockery.[44] (352)

Although it was customary for sea-island planters to 567
provide their Negro quarters with floors, occasionally tem- 342
porary quarters were built without floors as a means of 164
combating some contagious disease. For instance, after 744
the slaves on his plantation had suffered from a disastrous
attack of Asiatic cholera, E. M. Whaley, of Little Edisto
Island, burned the old quarters and built temporary ones
without floors at a considerable distance from the former
location. It was to the planter's interest to keep his "peo- 567
ple" well and as comfortable as he deemed consistent with 471
his plantation economy, for a slave was the most valuable 435
piece of property he possessed. Cattle were valued at $7
a head, a yoke of oxen and wagon at $45, a mule at $100,
but a prime slave might bring as high as $2,000.

MEDICAL CARE OF THE SLAVE

Sea-island planters, aside from humanitarian reasons, 567
carefully guarded their people's health because it was good 758
business to do so. In the lists of rules which the planter
included in his contract with his overseer, there invariably
occurred specific instructions concerning the medical care
which the Negroes should receive. P. C. J. Weston's
instructions to his overseer on his rice plantation in South
Carolina began with the statement, "The Proprietor, in the
first place, wishes the Overseer most distinctly to understand that his first object is to be, under all circumstances, the care and well being of the Negroes." The instructions further read: "Strong medicines should be left to the

[44] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 249, 264.

567 758 Doctor; and since the Proprietor never grudges a Doctor's bill, however large, he has a right to expect that the Overseer shall always send for the Doctor when a serious case occurs."[45] But the Overseer was cautioned against permitting persons to lie up when "there was nothing or little the matter with them."

567 758 743 Many plantations had hospitals, or "sick houses," as the Negroes called them. The hospital on Prospect Hill plantation on Edisto Island was a brick building. Sir Charles Lyell found the hospital on Hopeton plantation in 1845 to consist of "three wards, all perfectly clean and well-ventilated." One was for men, another for women, and a third for lying-in women.[46] The hospital was in charge of the mistress of the plantation, or the overseer's wife, assisted by a Negro woman whose special task it was 567 758 to look after the sick. Sir Charles observed that the Negroes refused to take medicine from any hands other than those of their master or mistress. When a Negro child was sick it was usually the mistress who sat up all night giving medicines rather than the mother. After Mrs. Trescot, of Barnwell Island, had been up all night nursing a Negro woman, she said to her English guest next morning, "When people talk of my having so many slaves, I always tell them that it is the slaves who own me. Morning, noon, and night, I'm obliged to look after them, to doctor them, and to attend them in every way."[47]

Since the owner and his wife or his overseer attended to all the simple illnesses of his people, he sometimes attempted to school himself in medical knowledge. The

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[45] *DeBow's Review*, XXI, 38; Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 116, 120.
[46] Lyell, *op. cit.*, p. 264.
[47] Russell, *My Diary North and South*, p. 141.

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Southern Agriculturist, in an article on "The Plantation Doctor," issued the warning that "the planter of all others, should be acquainted with medical remedies, to cure those diseases and injuries to which his Negroes, from their occupations, are so frequently liable."[48] The planter might obtain for his own instruction in the treatment of minor diseases numerous books of "family medicine." One such book, *The Planter's Guide and Family Book of Medicine*,[49] published in Charleston in 1848, lists all the diseases common to the Negro together with the treatment therefor.

Despite the planter's own ministrations, his plantation medical bill was often high. Miss Mary B. Elliott's Account Book gives the medical bill for her plantation for seven of the years between 1837 and 1849. It was lowest in 1849 at $25 and highest in 1845 at $124.94 with an average for the seven years of $68.89. E. M. Whaley's bill of 1862 for his Little Edisto Negroes whom he had moved to Georgia amounted to $329.50. The bill, which is itemized for the year, indicates that the doctor was frequently called at night to treat a sick Negro. For six days in April the doctor visited Jim every day and gave him medicine, charging $2.50 or more a visit. From November 4 to December 2 he visited Louisa's child, sometimes every day, at other times only once a week.[50] Some planters made a contract with their doctors to attend to their Negroes at a given price per head for the year. For example, a planter near Savannah paid his doctor a flat rate of $1.50 a slave, while a certain Dr. Pritchard

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[48] *Southern Agriculturist*, X, 561.

[49] J. Hume Simons, *The Planter's Guide and Family Book of Medicine.*

[50] MS in Whaley Papers dated December 6, 1862.

567 758 offered his services to another planter in that vicinity at $1.25 a head.[51] On St. Helena Island at least four of the planters were doctors.

567 164 Negroes seem to have been especially susceptible to cholera, "peripneumonia," and dysentery, or bloody flux, as it was most commonly called. When once cholera appeared among the Negroes, it usually could not be controlled until several had died. In 1852 and again in [165] 1854 cholera swept off many of the best slaves on Louis Manigault's plantation on Argyle Island, Georgia. After [734] these losses, Manigault bought 771 acres of "high land" on the Georgia main which he used partly for cholera camps and for the summer residence of the Negro children.[52] In 1855 when about fifty cases of cholera appeared among James Hamilton Couper's Hopeton plantation Negroes, he wrote to his son in alarm, "The causes I cannot discover, they [the Negroes] live at various settlements, are employed in every kind of work, and have the same food."[53]

Couper considered "peripneumonia" almost as alarming as cholera.[54] "Peripneumonia" was the ante-bellum term for pleuropneumonia, a combination of pleurisy and [165] pneumonia. Although it did not occur in epidemics, it was nearly always fatal to the slaves. Although dysentery did not always appear among the plantation Negroes in a severe form, in 1857 Henry A. Middleton, Jr., lost forty of his people on Weehaw plantation, near Georgetown, from an epidemic of this disease.[55] After the epidemic,

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[51] Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 166.

[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 143.

[53] Couper-Wylly Papers, March 9, 1855.

[54] *Ibid.*, April 13, 1857.

[55] Weehaw Plantation Book.

the village was moved about three-fourths of a mile away 567
to the pine woods and the houses built farther apart. 164

Smallpox and yellow fever also caused the planters 567
considerable alarm, although there were more widespread
efforts to prevent these infectious diseases than others to 164
which the Negroes were subject. The state quarantine 744
laws greatly reduced the number of cases of yellow fever 751
and the planter's general use of vaccine lessened the epidemics of smallpox. Henry A. Middleton, Jr.'s, Weehaw Plantation Book indicates that he regularly had the black children vaccinated.

Although sea-island planters usually considered that 567
the winter months were the hardest for the Negroes and 164
the summer months for the whites, the Negroes also suffered from malaria, although not to the same extent as the whites. In 1857 James Hamilton Couper wrote to his son James that the illness of another son was "induced by the same state of the atmosphere which has caused a very general malaria of typhoid fever among the Ne- (758)
groes." For four weeks during this attack there was an (743)
average of forty ill in the plantation hospital.[64]

The death of a trusted slave often brought a deal of 567
sorrow into the planter's family. In recounting the 165
deaths on the plantation in a letter to his son, Couper wrote 764
in 1857:

> To myself personally the most painful loss has been that of poor old Sandy and his wife Joan. . . . I requested Mr. Brown to read the funeral service at his grave; and your mother, myself and the family attended. He was an honest, faithful and good man; and I part with him as with a devoted and tried friend. He was

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[64] Couper-Wylly Papers, April 13, 1857.

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567 among my earliest playmates, and during my whole life his attach-
165 ment never varied. I shall gratify myself by placing a stone on his
964 grave.[57]

INFANT WELFARE

567 The children's diseases were sometimes more disas-
trous than cholera or dysentery, despite the general pre-
758 cautions observed in caring for the plantation children.
Planters usually insisted that the young be given special
attention, and they also urged mothers to take proper
567 care of themselves during pregnancy. Henry A. Middle-
ton, Jr., would not permit any woman to work on his is-
758 land lands in midwinter, and he immediately put *enceinte*
844 women on half task until confinement. Every planter
(843) who had a hospital for his people insisted that the mothers
(743) come there for confinement, for there they could be
better cared for and kept more quiet, but the women in-
variably preferred their own houses where they could
gossip with their friends without restraint, and they
usually managed, as Couper told Sir Charles Lyell, to
be taken by surprise at home. Mothers were allowed a
567 month of rest after confinement, an advantage rarely en-
758 joyed by hard-working English peasants, and were not
846 put at full tasks until the child was eight months old.

Doctors were seldom called at the confinement of a
567 Negro woman,[58] for the woman's mistress herself seldom
844 received such attention. In every group of plantation
slaves there were one or more midwives listed on the
759 plantation record as the "granny," or nurse, but known

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[57] *Ibid.*

[58] MS in Hawks Letters, Library of Congress. Dr. J. M. Hawks to Esther Hawks, May 17, 1862, from Edisto Island: "In midwifery here, Drs. are not called, several births have occurred since I have been here all attended by the Negro women on the place."

to the people themselves by the respectful title of Maum. 567 The mistress herself or the overseer's wife was also 844 usually present to assist the midwife at the confinement 759 of a Negro woman. At Christmas the planter rewarded 567 the granny by giving her 75 cents for each delivery during the year. 434 He also might seek to encourage the mother to care for her child properly by giving her, perhaps, as much as a $1 for every living child she had at Christmas. Henry A. Middleton, Jr.'s, practice was to give every woman with an infant one month old $1 and the same amount to every woman with a year-old child. At Christmas in 1859, he rewarded twenty-six mothers with month-old infants, and fourteen mothers with year-old infants.[39]

St. Helena planters allowed new-born infants "two 567 of each garment and six diapers."[40] 854 The garments were flannel dresses, dresses of cotton checks, and jackets of [291] homespun.[41]

As soon as a mother resumed work after confinement, she was often required to take her infant to a nurse or granny, whose task it was to take care of both the "lap babies" and the "knee babies" during working hours. Sometimes the same granny looked after the plantation babies year after year, while on other plantations this task was assigned to a group of women who took turns every month "minding child." Henry A. Middleton, Jr., rewarded the "monthly nurses" on his plantation "75c. for infants that live." As long as a mother suckled her infant, 567 she left her work in the field at stated intervals to do so, or 853 an older child brought the baby to the field to be fed.

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[39] Weehaw Plantation Book.

[40] *Port Royal Letters*, p. 44.

[41] Weehaw Plantation Book.

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567 After eight months the child was put on a diet of vegetables,
853 milk, and starches prepared, on the best managed
862 plantation, by a special cook assigned to that task. On
Weehaw plantation the children's allowance was given out every morning and cooked for them three times a day. They had vegetable soup every day and rice for dinner three times a week. While the potatoes lasted, they had potatoes every day for breakfast. During the winter they had molasses three times a week and milk on alternate days. After May first, however, they had molasses every day until milk was again used in winter.[62]

567 Despite this special attention, the proportion of children
165 in the total number of deaths on Weehaw was
high. In 1856 six out of eleven deaths were of infants under one year; in 1857 thirty-three out of forty deaths were of children under three years; in 1858 twelve out of fourteen were of children under two; in 1859 fourteen out of eighteen were of children under one; in 1860 thirteen out of twenty were of children. The causes of death
(164) as listed by the planter were as follows: diarrhea, pneumonia, debility, fever, spasms, lockjaw, dysentery, convulsions, accident, cholic, worms, and teething, with the largest number dying of lockjaw.

165 It must not be overlooked that the infant death rate among the whites was also high. Planters on St. Helena Island seem to have had as much difficulty in rearing their own children as those of their Negroes. The tombstones still standing in the cemeteries there show that parents sometimes lost four or five infants in succession. James A. Pope lost five children under six years of age

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[62] *Ibid.*

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between 1833 and 1850. Within a period of five years William Jenkins lost three infants in succession. 165

Data for the comparison of the death rate of whites and Negroes in the ante-bellum period are meager. The death rates for Charleston from 1830 to 1845 are as follows: 165 567

COMPARISON OF WHITE AND BLACK DEATH RATES IN CHARLESTON[a]

Year	Deaths Per Thousand	
	Whites	Blacks
1830	25.4	25.0
1831	21.4	26.3
1832	19.2	18.1
1833	18.2	17.9
1834	23.8	22.7
1835	23.2	21.5
1836	24.6	51.0
1837	21.1	21.4
1838	54.6	30.3
1839	33.4	25.6
1840	19.7	21.5
1841	15.2	22.3
1842	19.9	20.9
1843	16.4	30.4
1844	14.4	23.1
1845	18.9	20.6

The death rate of the whites was highest in 1838 when 54.6 persons per 1,000 died due to an epidemic of yellow fever, and lowest in 1841 when only 15.2 per 1,000 died, with an average for the sixteen years of 23.1 per 1,000. For the blacks the death rate was highest in 1836 when 51 per 1,000 died from an epidemic of cholera, and lowest in 1833 when only 17.9 per 1,000 died, with a general average of 24.8. The general average for the whites was lower by only 1.7 persons per 1,000 than the general average for the blacks. At the same time the average 000

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[a] J. D. B. DeBow, *Industrial Resources of the United States*, II, 294.

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000 death rate for the whites in Philadelphia from 1831 to 1840 was 23.2 per 1,000 and for the blacks 32.3 per 1,000.[84]

567 163 165 The data available showing the ratio of births to deaths in the slave population of the sea-island region are likewise meager. Henry A. Middleton, Jr.'s, Weehaw Plantation Book records the births and deaths on his plantation from 1845 to 1860, as follows:

BIRTHS AND DEATHS ON WEEHAW PLANTATION, 1845-1860[85]

Year	Births	Deaths	Increase	Decrease
1845	21	24	..	3
1846	17	20	..	3
1847	28	16	12	..
1848	21	25	..	4
1849	22	20	2	..
1850	26	9	17	..
1851	18	19	..	1
1852	25	20	5	..
1853	29	22	7	..
1854	24	20	4	4
1855	25	59	..	34
1856	27	11	15	..
1857	22	40	..	18
1858	28	14	14	..
1859	20	18	2	..
1860	31	20	11	..
Total	384	357		

Beginning in 1845 with approximately 252, the slave population of Weehaw plantation showed after sixteen years an increase of births over deaths of 27, giving an increase of 10.7 per cent in the slave population. The number of deaths was highest in 1855 when an epidemic of whooping cough and measles among the children brought the number up to 59 and lowest in 1850 when

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[84] *Ibid.*

[85] The high death rate is probably accounted for by the fact that planters usually included stillbirths in the numbers of deaths.

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only nine died. The number of births was greatest in 1860 with thirty-one and lowest in 1846 with only seventeen.

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Some idea of the child-bearing period of the slave women on St. Helena Island may be obtained from records in the John E. Fripp papers. One record gives a list of births from 1802 to 1860. Of the twenty women whose child-bearing records seem to have been complete, two women had ten children each; one, nine children; two, eight children; three, seven children; one, five children; four, four children; four, three children; and three, two children. It is possible to ascertain from the records at what age ten of these women first bore a child. Die, who was the youngest mother in the group, was fifteen when her first child was born; Jenny was seventeen; Daphney, eighteen; Jane, Judy, Matilda, Olive, and Martha, nineteen; Doll, twenty; and Hetty, twenty-two. Four of Hetty's ten children died in infancy as did four of Olive's eight children. The others lost from one to two children each.

PLANTATION PROFITS AND LOSSES

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James Hamilton Couper, who administered the James Hamilton estate for forty years, often said that the estate realized a higher percentage of profit on an investment in Schuylkill River bonds issued by the city of Philadelphia than it did upon an investment in 600 slaves and 1,500 acres of Georgia seacoast farming land.[66] Data for a tract of 800 acres of this estate raising sea-island cotton have been preserved as follows:

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The proportion of whites to blacks remained practically the same during these three decades, the whites being 15.8 per cent of the total population in 1840 and 16.8 per cent in 1860.

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Even with such a small percentage of whites in the population, there were, as Mrs. Capers suggests in 1791, social classes among the whites. There were three general classes with various shadings of social differentiation between them: the "genteel," the middle class, and the poor. Some of the "eminent planters," of whom Mrs. Capers spoke, belonged to the gentry. They were the ones whose sea-island cotton sold at the top prices. They educated their sons in England in the days before the Revolution and afterward in South Carolina or in the North. They spent the hot summer months at a health resort; they had their hunting clubs and their literary societies. They entertained on their plantations and at Beaufort and Charleston.

The middle class was composed chiefly of the overseers and trades people, although no strict line was drawn between classes. It sometimes happened that an overseer was himself a planter and a member of the gentry. Even on St. Helena Island there were storekeepers who sold small supplies to the planters and traded with the slaves. The agent for the Federal Government found a German storekeeper on the Island in 1861 who had taken considerable quantities of cotton in payment of debts which he claimed some of the planters had allowed to accumulate.[18]

It has often been claimed that St. Helena's Parish con-

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[18] MS in Port Royal Correspondence.

CHAPTER VII

THE SLAVE COMMUNITY

THE SLAVE AND THE LASH

567 461 [466] [431] THE EVERY-DAY life of the slave people on a St. Helena plantation was by no means crowded with constant toil. In the late spring when the cotton had to be hoed at the critical stages and again in the autumn when the cotton was in "good blow" they might work from "day clean" to "fust dark," but these were unusual periods, and, as a reward for the extra labor, their masters dealt out choice rations of molasses and meat and passed around presents of tobacco and gay headcloths. The ordinary task of a full hand kept him in the field only four or five hours a day so that the "smart" ones were habitually through by two o'clock. Only the "t'ick headed" remained as late as five. The rest of the day was theirs to spend as they chose.

000 A southern youth, Hamilton Couper, who had spent all his life on his father's sea-island cotton and rice plantation on the Georgia coast was surprised to find the white servants working so hard in New Haven where he was attending Yale. The Irish maid-of-all-work in his rooming house, so he wrote to his mother, "does more than any 567 servant I have ever seen."[1] The Honorable Amelia Murray of England who visited Couper's parents at their Hopeton plantation was also impressed with the difference in work required of the southern slave and the northern "saucy help." "I never saw servants in any old English family," she observed, "more comfortable, or more de-

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[1] Couper-Wylly Papers. Hamilton Couper to Mrs. J. H. Couper, 1846.

[p. 124]

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voted; it is quite a relief to see anything so patriarchal, after the apparently uncomfortable relations of masters and servants in the Northern States."[2] Sir Charles Lyell, another distinguished English guest in this coastal family, thought the condition of the slaves was "more like that formerly existing between lords and their retainers in the old feudal times of Europe, than to any thing now to be found in America."[3] 567

Even the slaves themselves admitted that they were generally well-treated. All on St. Helena Island agreed that, while most of them had "good Massa," certain planters were "Massa Debil heself."[4] The Coffin Negroes reproached the northern missionaries who came to the Island after the capture of Port Royal in 1861 with the fact that there was no "confusion" when they belonged to "Ole Massa."[5] Yet other Negroes were careful to show the missionaries their scars from the lash, and one woman solemnly reported that four babies had been "killed within her by whipping."[6] Miss Laura M. Towne found in one dining room "a whipping-post and pulley for stretching and whipping,"[7] which was probably a fly brush with which some facetious person had tried Miss Towne's credulity. 567 797

There was far less cruelty practised on the sea-island slaves than northern sympathizers were inclined to be- 567

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[2] Murray, *Letters From the United States, Cuba and Canada*, p. 220.

[3] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 261.

[4] MS in Arthur Sumner Papers, Port Royal, May 18, 1862.

[5] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 165.

[6] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 58. For other instances of cruelty practised by St. Helena planters see Sarah M. Grimké, *American Slavery As It Is*. It must be remembered that this book was published to prove a case against slavery and that many of the accusations are obviously absurd.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

567 lieve. Whipping made a rebellious and sullen slave who shirked his work and stirred up trouble. This was the reason that a driver was permitted to inflict stripes only in the presence of the overseer and that some planters forbade whipping altogether. No driver on the Butler plantation on St. Simon's Island was permitted when R. King was overseer to inflict punishment until after a regular trial. "When I pass sentence myself," said King, "various modes of punishment are adopted; the lash least of all,—Digging stumps, or clearing away trash about the settlements, in their own time; but the most severe is, confinement at home six months to twelve months, or longer."[8] All planters admitted that punishment was necessary in order to carry on the plantation routine; it was inherent in the system of slave labor; but the lash was the least effective mode.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

567 181 Before 1860 it had frequently been pointed out by travelers in the South and by masters themselves that the coastal Negroes, especially the sea-island Negroes, were less advanced culturally than the "Up-Country," or Piedmont Negroes, because they had less association with civilizing forces. It was evident to even a casual observer that on the sea-island cotton plantations, where the slaves had contact with few whites except the overseer and his family and but little intercourse with the slaves of other islands or even of other plantations on the same island, they must remain more stationary than where they equaled in number the whites or even formed a minority, as was true in a large part of Piedmont South Carolina.

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[8] *Southern Agriculturist*, Dec., 1828, p. 524.

Sir Charles Lyell even found a difference in the cultural 567 development of the various sea-island Negroes. Those on 181 the smaller plantations on St. Simon's Island were, for instance, more civilized than those on the larger estates.[9]

When Edward L. Pierce visited St. Helena Island in 1862 to observe the plantation conditions as an agent for the Federal Government, he arrived at the conclusion that slavery had bred out of the Negro all manly qualities. They had become "an abject race, more docile and submissive than those of any other locality." They did not want to fight; they did not want to be uplifted; they wanted to be left alone. "Nowhere has the deterioration of the Negroes from their native manhood," he wrote in an article for the *Atlantic Monthly*, "been carried so far as on these Sea Islands,—a deterioration due to their isolation from the excitements of more populous districts, the constant serveillance of the overseers, and their intermarriage with one another, involving a physical degeneracy with which inexorable Nature punishes disobedience to her laws."[10]

On St. Helena Island, where there were some two 567 thousand slaves to a little more than two hundred whites, 177 the Negroes learned very slowly the ways of the whites. Their mastery of English was far less advanced than that of the Piedmont slaves. They spoke a garbled English, 567 imperfect words and expressions which they and their 191 parents and grandparents had learned from the few whites with whom they came in contact. Their speech mystified the northern missionaries who came to the Island

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[9] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 268.

[10] *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept., 1863; also in E. L. Pierce, *Addresses and Papers*, p. 106.

567 191 after the Federal occupation in 1861. Arthur Sumner, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, tried to describe to his cousin their way of speaking. "These negroes speak with an inarticulate jabber. The sounds roll around in their great chops, and come pouring out through their huge mouths, so that I find it easier to understand a foreign language than confused utterance. Their idioms, too, are funny. I told Byron, a boy who waits upon me, that I was going to distribute clothing on his place. 'Talk *we* house?' said he:—meaning, 'Are you speaking of our house?' . . . Byron came to me with a message from his mother—'Ma says if you give her some trade'—Imagine such a sentence uttered as if it were a word of many syllables. Can you make it out? . . . 'Ma wants to know if you will give her some thread?' "[11]

567 181 184 These missionaries from the North, who, of course, knew nothing first-hand of slavery, thought that the St. Helena Negroes were the most degraded and backward of all the coastal slaves in the South.[12] After the northern whites had become acquainted with other sea-island Negroes from such places as St. Simon's Island, Georgia, and Edisto Island, South Carolina, who were quartered temporarily on St. Helena Island by the Federal Army, they were still of the opinion that the St. Helena slaves were the most retarded in the South except those on the sugar plantations in Louisiana. Arthur Sumner wrote late in 1862, "The Georgia and Florida negroes are vastly superior in appearance, character, and intelligence, to the natives of these Islands. It is the testimony

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[11] Arthur Sumner Papers. Port Royal, May 18, 1862. The last word was pronounced as if spelled tred, not trade.

[12] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 181.

of all those who knew the South, that the colored people 567 •
of the Sea Islands, are the lowest grade of Negroes in 181
America. I'm sure I hope I shall never see a worse set 184
than those who live on our part of St. Helena Island."[13]
Miss Harriet Ware, who had been conducting a school on St. Helena, concluded in 1863 that "as a general thing the Edisto people are a better class of blacks, more intelligent and cultivated, so to speak."[14]

It is not surprising that the St. Helena slaves should 567
have been less advanced than those even of neighboring 184
islands, for as it has already been pointed out, St. Helena 177
Island was one of the most isolated of the Sea Islands. It
is a buffer from the Atlantic for two other large islands, (133)
and the Island itself is cut up into various small islands by the broad tidal creeks which interlace it. It is likely that at least half of the more than two thousand slaves who inhabited St. Helena in 1860 had never been off the Island, for Beaufort was difficult to reach and only the most privileged were allowed to go there. Shut off from contact with the outside world, they were thus unfamiliar with many of the cultural traits of the whites which had sprung up since their own forebears had become "tamed."

It is remarkable, then, that the slaves should have 567
achieved as much of the culture of the whites as they did. 177
They were quick to learn from the few whites with whom they were thrown and from the house servants who went back and forth with the master's family from the Island

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[13] Arthur Sumner Papers. Dec., 26, 1862.

[14] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 150. See also the opinion of Charles P. Ware, *ibid.*, p. 97; of W. C. Gannett, *ibid.*, p. 178; and see James S. Pike, *The Prostrate State: South Carolina Under Negro Government*, ch. XXXII; Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, p. 94; Hazard Stevens, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, II, 354.

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567 to Beaufort, Charleston, and the North. Some of the St.
177 Helena people were as alert and ambitious as the whites
themselves. Charles Ware, of Massachusetts, in 1862
567 described Charles, the carpenter on Hope plantation, as "a
man after my own heart." "He attracted me first by his
554 dignified and respectful demeanor, and by his superior culture. He has a little touch of self-consideration. He, more than any other negro I know, seems to me like a white person."[18]

SOCIAL CLASSES

The Negroes themselves perhaps unconsciously set a premium on a knowledge of "buckra" ways, for they placed in the upper classes of their social scale those who had superior advantages of learning the customs of the dominant race. The "swonga" people were the drivers who took their orders directly from the overseer, the house servants who were intimately associated with the master's and the overseer's families, the mechanics who were permitted to hire their own time from their masters and work in Beaufort or Charleston. To this group also belonged any among them who from superior rank or intelligence acted as their official or self-appointed leaders. The religious leaders and the plantation watchmen were usually "swonga" Negroes, as were also the witch doctors and those who could boast of physical prowess. It is obviously difficult to point out definitely the various gradations in the social classes among the slaves, but in general the drivers and mechanics stood at the head, followed by the house servants, and at the bottom of the scale stood the field hands.

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[18] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 82.

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Edward S. Philbrick was surprised in 1862 to find the St. Helena Negroes so sensitive to social distinctions and "caste feeling." "There is no race in the world," he wrote from Coffin's Point plantation, "with whom a little *state* gives so much power as the African. They have always been accustomed to see men of any power treated as such, and receiving the attention corresponding thereto. They have always seen a white man on a horse, and have got to think it so far a badge of power & caste, that they will hardly lift their hats to a white man on foot. In fact the Negroes themselves, while moving about from one plantation to another always find some old mule to straddle & look down with contempt upon a 'walking nigger.'"[16] Miss Laura M. Towne, a missionary like Philbrick, also observed the Negroes' sensitiveness to class feeling. Upon visiting two Negro women, she was made to understand that they were "both of the colored aristocracy, had lived in the best families, never did any work to speak of, longed for the young ladies and young 'mas'rs' back again, because April was the month they used to come to Beaufort and have such gay times."[17]

SLAVE MARRIAGES

567

The amount of interference in the domestic life of the slave varied with the opinions and attitudes of the master. A Charleston planter told his English guest, Captain Basil Hall, in 1827, that he made no attempt to regulate the habits and morals of his people except in matters of police. "We don't care what they do when their tasks are over—we lose sight of them till the next day," he said. "The

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[16] Port Royal Correspondence, E. S. Philbrick to E. L. Pierce, March 27, 1862.

[17] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 14.

567 men may have, for instance, as many wives as they please,
so long as they do not quarrel about such matters."[18]
[177] Nevertheless, most planters insisted that their slaves give
up their African customs of polygamy and accept the
[595] Christian standard of monogamy as the rule of their
family life.

567 St. Helena planters quite generally required their
177 slaves to choose a mate for life, and they attempted to im-
584 press the solemnity of the marriage upon the contracting
parties by the observance of a ceremony. The engagement of a slave couple was formally recognized on the plantation when the black man asked the master's permission to marry, designating specifically the chosen girl. Many owners encouraged their men to choose from among the girls of their own plantations, but they did not always insist upon it.[19] A man might select his wife from another plantation on the Island, but if he did so he must suffer the inconveniences of not having a woman to look after his clothes, grind his corn into grits, and cook his meals. On the other hand, a wife on a neighboring plantation gave the husband an excuse for leaving his own plantation frequently.

567 Upon gaining permission to marry, the couple might
585 request that the ceremony be performed at once, where-
177 upon the planter, if without too many religious scruples,
might informally "pronounce" them man and wife. The master was more likely to insist, however, upon a marriage by a white preacher or by one of the religious leaders

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[18] Hall, *Travels in North America*, II, 216.

[19] Mr. J. Swinton Whaley, of Little Edisto Island, possesses today a bill of sale for a Negro girl his father paid $1,200 for in order that one of his slaves might have the wife he loved.

567 585 177

from among his own slaves. A wedding was often made the occasion of a general celebration on the plantation. The master gave special provisions, such as beef and rice for making a stew, and molasses for sweetened water to wash it down, and the young ladies made the cake.[20] The mistress and her daughters also influenced the bride to come to the ceremony properly gowned in white with a flowing veil improvised from a discarded window curtain from the master's house. The mistress might provide this extra finery or the bride herself might purchase it with her hoarded savings. If it were the marriage of a house servant, the ceremony might be performed in the kitchen or dining room of the "big house" or in a nearby grove of trees. Marriages of field hands were frequently performed in the open or in the praise house, as the plantation church was called.

567 585

After the feasting and the merrymaking were over, the couple went home to the cabin which the master or overseer had set aside for them. But they did not always go home destined to remain faithful to the vows which they had just taken. The looseness of the slave's code of morality was one of the evils most often cited against him.[21] Despite the preachers' instructions upon the nature, sacredness, and perpetuity of marriage many slaves did not hold themselves to such a doctrine. This circumstance is not surprising when one considers the polygamous customs of their African ancestors and the failure of law either to recognize or protect Negro marriages. The issue of an extra-marital relation placed but little additional

567 585 837 (577)

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[20] Murray, *Letters from the United States*, p. 224.

[21] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 272, 273.

●567 burden upon the parents, for the master provided for all
585 children alike. A violation of marriage vows was accom-
837 panied by no disgrace or punishment other than that in-
flicted by the master or by the church if the culprit were
a member. There seems to have been very little intimacy
567 between the white men and the Negro women on St.
Helena Island. The northern missionaries found not
(144) more than five or six mulattoes on the whole Island in
1861.

567 There were forces sufficiently strong to keep many
slaves faithful to their marriage vows. Chancellor Har-
581 per, of Charleston, called attention in 1854 to the fact that
slave marriages were often faithfully adhered to during
life.[22] In 1857 a sea-island planter, in recounting the
567 deaths among his people, mentioned with sadness that of
581 "poor old Sandy and his wife Joan." "The latter died
593 apparently of mere debility; and her husband, after watch-
(165) ing until her death, went to bed at midnight, complaining
merely of a sore throat, and expired the next evening without any one suspecting that he was seriously ill." The planter concluded that the faithful old man had died of "mental depression, operating on a feeble constitution."[23] On Edisto Island there still lives "Old Jeff," born in slavery, who, although as devoted to his wife as Sandy, lived on after her death. Every day he went to her grave to mourn and there he slept at night. After several months his friends became alarmed at his behavior. Upon being questioned he explained that he intended to dig up

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[22] "Memoir on Slavery," DeBow, *Industrial Resources of the United States*, II, 219.

[23] Couper-Wylly Papers, James Hamilton Couper to James Couper, April 13, 1857.

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his wife's bones and take them to his house so that he could have 'he wit' me always."[24]

FAMILY LIFE

567 581 562 (831) (837)

In their attempt to impress the sacredness of marriage upon their slaves, the whites were often discouraged by the low value which the slave women placed upon chastity. Wives were as prone as husbands to break the marriage vows. In fact, the female tended to be the dominant sex in slave life. It was decidedly to the advantage of a black man to have the good will of one of the women of the plantation, for life thereby was made much easier. On the plantations where clothes were issued by the yard, it was customary for the women to do the sewing for the family so that a husband was almost as dependent upon his wife for a new suit of clothes as he was upon his master; but, on the plantations where superannuated women were delegated to do all the plantation sewing and mending, the slave men were somewhat more independent of their women.

567 252

The weekly issuance of rations, a predominant portion of which was corn, was also dealt out in the bulk and must not only be shelled but pounded into grits before being cooked. It was customary for the women and children to assemble at the cornhouse on Monday, an hour or so before "fust dark," to receive the weekly allowance from the driver. Kneeling or sitting upon the ground with her children about her, each woman shelled the corn, using a cob to increase her speed. On some of the plantations there were improvised mortars for shelling corn, made of (412)

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[24] Information obtained from J. Swinton Whaley, Little Edisto, S. C., and from a personal interview with the Negro.

567 252 (412) (285) huge logs hollowed at one end. At these, two stood with their rude pestles striking alternately up and down. After the corn was shelled, the driver poured all upon a large hide or blanket and measured each person's portion into a basket, made by hand from pine straw and palmetto. After receiving the corn, the women ground it into grits, each waiting her turn at one of the hand-mills near the cornhouse.

567 252 262 With the aid of her children, the mother prepared supper from the rations just issued, supplementing the corn and salt pork with "turnip salad" or cow-peas from the "patch" back of the cabin, sweet potatoes roasted in the ashes, oysters or crabs from the creek, or with luxuries which she had bought at one of the island stores. Into the black pot placed on a bed of coals on the hearth went the grits to be boiled until thick and tender, or, perhaps, vegetables and fat pork might be cooking there. If so, the corn meal, which had come out of the mill together with the grits, would be made into a pone, cooked either on the open hearth or, if the family were thrifty, in a frying pan over the coals. The elders first helped themselves from (231) (264) the pot, and then turned it over to the children who ate to their satisfaction, and finally relinquished it to the dogs, invariably a part of the slave family, who licked it clean for the next meal.[25]

567 264 The mother also prepared the hasty breakfast eaten just after the conch blew at "day clean," if, indeed, the workers took time for breakfast, and filled her own and

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[25] See Laura M. Towne, "Pioneer Work on the Sea Islands," *Southern Workman*, July, 1901.

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her husband's pails which they took to the field with them 567 264
for dinner.[28]

If the wife were frugal, she might have a portion of 567
the weekly rations left when Monday came around again, 462
and these she might either feed to her pigs and chickens or 432
sell to the overseer or to an island storekeeper. The (231)
money was hers to use for the good of the family, but it (434)
was hers, nevertheless. It was the woman of the family
who, with the aid of her children, worked most of the
family patch, and it was usually the woman who marketed
the produce and pocketed the money received in exchange.

The planters helped to make of woman the dominant 567
sex in the family life of the slave by the position which 562
they gave her in the plantation regime. The cabin was
hers. The children, too, were listed on the plantation
records as belonging to the mother. Seldom was the (551)
father's name indicated. Thus a person might go through
life known as Binah's Toby or Moll's July. Likewise the (553)
mother had the privilege of naming the new baby unless
she graciously yielded the right to its father or to a friend
or relative. In this right she often exercised a singular (551)
taste, for one child might be called Jupiter, another
Quash, a third January, and a fourth Hard Times.

Miss Towne was amused at the jealousy of their 562
"natural rights" which the men on St. Helena Island began 593
to show after that region had come under the jurisdiction
of the Federal Army during the Civil War. "Political
freedom they are rather shy of, and ignorant of," she

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[28] Some planters, as it has already been pointed out, delegated plantation cooks to prepare the noon meal for the field hands so that they might have something hot to eat at this time. Some planters also allowed an hour's rest at nine o'clock for breakfast. (461)

562 wrote, "but domestic freedom—the right just found, to
593 have their own way in their families and rule their wives—
that is an inestimable privilege! In slavery the woman
567 was far more important, and was in every way held higher
562 than the man. Several speakers have been here who have
advised the people to set the women in their proper place
—never to tell them anything of their concerns, etc., etc.;
and the notion of being bigger than women generally, is
just now inflating the conceit of the males to an amazing
degree. When women get the vote, too, no people will be
more indignant than these, I suppose."[27]

567 The care of the children was divided between the
855 mother and the plantation nurse, with the other children
also doing their share of "minding child." When Captain
Basil Hall visited a plantation near Charleston on his tour
of the South in 1828 he found the mothers in the field at
their work and "a sober old matron in charge of the three
dozen shining urchins, collected together in a house near
the center of the village. Over the fire hung a large pot
[262] of hominy, a preparation of Indian corn, making ready for
the little folks' supper, and a very merry, happy-looking
party they seemed."[28] At all other times, the children
were in the mother's care. It was not an uncommon sight
[854] to see a woman going about her home work with an infant
tied securely to her back.

567 Parents were severe in the discipline of their children,
593 for they did not want their offspring to grow up to be "no-
861 manners." They taught them to curtesy when ap-
867 proached by a white person and to hold out their hands to

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[27] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 184.

[28] Hall, *Travels in North America*, II, 210; *supra*, pp. 97-98.

shake; to keep silent in the presence of elders and otherwise 567
to show respect for age. Some of the missionaries 593
who arrived on St. Helena Island shortly after the opening 861
of the Civil War were indignant at the harsh treatment [867]
the children received at the hands of their parents. "I
don't suppose these children ever received a caress or a
word of tenderness since they were infants," wrote Arthur
Sumner. "The children are invariably spoken to in harsh
and peremptory tones by all grown niggers, and are
whipped unmercifully on the least offence. Yet they are
very obedient to their parents, and certainly stand much
more in awe of adult darkies than they do of us mild-eyed
missionaries."[29] Miss Towne concluded that parents were
not really harsh to their children, but that their rough way
of ordering them about, threatening to "skin um 'live"
and to "bro'k um back," merely sounded savage. All 567
visitors to the Sea Islands, either as guests of the master
before the War or as missionaries, agreed that the children, 865
despite the rough treatment from their parents and 157
despite the fact that they seemed to have no games,[30] were
a happy, carefree lot. Sir Charles Lyell thought the
Hopeton plantation children had "such bright, happy faces
when three or four years old, and from that age to ten or
twelve . . . such frank and confiding manners, as to be
very engaging."[31] Yet all were horrified by the fact that [291]
their mothers permitted them to run about in summer
completely nude, a practice which people of today, with
their recent adoption of the sunbath theory, would be inclined
to approve.

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[29] Arthur Sumner Papers, St. Helena Island, July 9, 1863.

[30] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 192n.

[31] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 263.

567 Obviously, there was not the opportunity for home
264 life in the slave family that there was in the free family,
592 nor was meal time the institution that it was in the white
family, for there was rarely to be found in the slave cabin
567 a "family table."[32] Some observers of slave life thought
also that there was little family affection among them.
593 Edward S. Philbrick wrote to a friend that there was far
less family affection and attachment among members of
slave families than existed among the Irish peasants, adding, however, that he did not know "how much allowance to make for their being so much less demonstrative in their emotions, and more inured to suffering."[33]

LEISURE TIME

567 When task was done, the slave was his own master
within the limits of plantation regulation. He might go
461 home to work on his piece of ground, tend his pigs and
chickens, play with his children, or fish in the creek. The
567 slave had several ways of making money for his own use,
in which he was encouraged by his master. As has already
461 been pointed out, the black people ordinarily supplied
432 their masters with chickens and eggs for which they usually
434 received the market price.[34] They often sold their
hogs and the truck from their garden patches; they wove baskets, and made boats and canoes. An overseer on the Butler plantation on St. Simon's Island said that he regularly allowed a certain number to go to town on Sundays

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[32] Pierce, "Report," *Rebellion Records*, sup., I, 304. "Except on Sundays, these people do not take their meals at a family table, but each one takes his hominy, bread, or potatoes sitting on the floor or on a bench, and at his own time. They say their masters never allowed them any regular time for meals." In this connection see *supra*, p. 137n.

[33] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 15.

[34] *Supra*, p. 86.

to dispose of eggs, coopers' wares and canoes, but required 567
that they be home by twelve o'clock unless by special 461
permission.[35] When it became illegal for a slave to hold 432
personal property, the master, overseer, storekeeper, and 434
slave all found ample means of evading the law as the (421)
cases arising on this statute indicate. Masters often paid
their people for extra work done on the plantation, such 567
as, gathering corn blades for fodder or collecting rice 434
straw. Miss Mary B. Elliott, of Beaufort, gave her slaves
5 cents a pound for blades.[36] The master also gave them
presents of money, especially at Christmas or New Year.

By thus being permitted to possess personal property 567
of his own, the slave felt his condition to be less abject. 241
Some planters tried to help their people to accumulate
more than they could ordinarily obtain through the sale of 434
"nigger truck" so that they might have some degree of
independence. James Hamilton Couper set apart a field
for the benefit of twenty-five picked men and allowed
them half of their Saturday's labor in which to work it.
He required all to work faithfully in the common field
during the first year, and at the end of that time divided
the $1,500 arising from the sale of the crop equally among
them. But when they were left to work the field as they (461)
chose, they did very little and at the end of two years
abandoned it entirely.[37]

While some slaves wisely spent their money for comforts 567
which the master did not provide, others laid out 432
their pittances in indulgences: liquor, tobacco, and fancy 511

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[35] "On the Management of the Butler Estate," *Southern Agriculturist*, Dec., 1828.

[36] Elliott Account Book.

[37] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 268.

567 clothes. An English visitor at Hopeton noticed that
432 whenever the mistress paid a visit to Savannah she was
511 overwhelmed with commissions from her slaves who
wished to obtain the latest fads in articles of dress, "of which they are passionately fond." "The stuff must be of the finest quality, and many instructions are given as to the precise color or fashionable shade. White muslin, with figured patterns, is the rage just now."[38]

567 The Negro spent a part of his spare time in simple
461 recreation. Indeed, many masters thought that he spent
most of it that way. If a tidal creek bordered the planta-
226 tion, as was true of most plantations on St. Helena Island,
the master permitted his people to fish freely for crabs, shrimp, bass, whiting, and catfish, sometimes, however, reserving for his own use the choicest sea foods, such as shrimp and whiting. It was seldom that a master permitted his people to go at will in boats upon the creeks, and only by special permission could they go upon the Sound for one of the most exciting of all water sports, drum fishing. In the fishing season, it was customary for the master to commission a certain number, usually three or four picked men, to do the drum fishing for the week, the fish, of course, being intended for the master's table. But when the men came in with a big catch, probably as many as five or six twenty-five pound fish, the fishermen not only had their reward from the catch, but the steaks were distributed among all the people as well. The slaves invariably considered the head the choice part of the fish. Even today it is not difficult to start an argument over who shall claim the head when a fish is about to be divided.

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[38] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, p. 265.

By plantation rule and by law of the state only one 567
slave to a plantation was permitted to carry a gun for 411
hunting, and he did so only to provide ducks for the mas- 223
ter's table or to kill the crows and blackbirds which ate the 656
seeds and the young plants in the fields.

The Negroes were also fond of singing and dancing, 567
and most planters indulged them in this propensity. One 533
South Carolina planter who had been having trouble in 535
disciplining his slaves supplied his people with fiddles and drums and "promoted dancing." To his gratification the ill temper of the slaves disappeared and peace was once more established on the plantation.[39] Their dancing was a sort of shuffle which animated the whole body, and was performed individually rather than by couples. The dance was usually held at night in the open or in one of the cabins and the entire group participated in the merrymaking. Miss Towne frequently complained after she reached St. Helena Island in 1862 that the Negroes on her plantation had been up singing and dancing all night.

Most visitors to the Sea Islands wondered at the 567
slaves' "passionate fondness" for singing. Fredrika 533
Bremer, a Scandinavian visitor to coastal South Carolina, was of the opinion that "one must see these people singing if one is rightly to understand their life." After attending a Negro church service, she declared that "they sang so that it was a pleasure to hear, with all their souls and with all their bodies in unison; for their bodies wagged, their heads nodded, their feet stamped, their knees shook, their elbows and their hands beat time to the tune and words

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[39] N. Herbemont, "On the Moral Discipline and Treatment of Slaves," *Southern Agriculturist*, IX, 70-75.

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567 533 which they sang with evident delight."[40] Captain Basil Hall, who was rowed down the Altamaha in a cypress dugout by "five smart negroes," was impressed by the "wild sort of song" with which they accompanied their labor. He thought the song "not very unlike that of the Canadian voyageurs, but still more nearly resembling that of the well-known Bunder-boatmen at Bombay."[41] Whitelaw Reid, who heard the Negroes singing at "Brick Church" on St. Helena in 1865, described their song, "Roll Jordan Roll," as having "a curiously monotonous melody."[42] Miss Towne thought that the St. Helena folk "in their lowest state . . . could always do one thing well—sing." "At first," she said, "they sang melody alone, but after having once been given the idea of harmony, they instantly adopted it."[43]

567 527 A holiday was always the occasion for much singing, dancing, and general merrymaking. It was the custom on St. Helena Island to give the Negroes Saturday afternoon and all of Sunday, three days at Christmas, and an occasional day at the end of a hard season of work. These were holidays which the master set aside for his people and instructed his overseer to observe. P. C. J. Weston clearly indicated in his "rules to the overseer" the holidays which he wished the Negroes on his South Carolina rice plantation to have:

> No work of any sort or kind is to be permitted to be done by negroes on Good Friday, or Christmas day, or on any Sunday, except going for a Doctor, or nursing sick persons; any work of this kind done on any of these days is to be reported to the Proprietor, who

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[40] Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, p. 393.

[41] Hall, *Travels in North America*, II, 228.

[42] Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, p. 103.

[43] Towne, "Pioneer Work on the Sea Islands," *Southern Workman*, July, 1901.

will pay for it. The two days following Christmas day; the first 567
Saturdays after finishing threshing, planting, hoeing, and harvest, 527
are also to be holidays, on which the people may work for themselves. Only half task is to be done on every Saturday, except during planting and harvest, and [except by] those who have misbehaved or been lying up during the week.[44]

Most of their holidays the slaves spent "pleasuring themselves." Christmas was the great event of the year, for it was at this time that the master distributed rewards to his people as well as extra provisions of beef and molasses and "hands of tobacco." The master of at least one [273]
sea-island plantation also provided his slaves with "plenty of whiskey." At the end of the three-day orgy the Negroes were often "completely done up with eating, drinking, and dancing."[45]

A holiday was also the occasion for many requests to [574]
visit the island stores and neighboring plantations, but most planters discouraged inter-plantation visits and required the overseer and the drivers to check up frequently
on the activities in the "street." An overseer was sup- 567
posed to see that all was well in the quarters before he went to bed, and the drivers were also responsible for keeping the street quiet. It was by this means rather than by the patrol system that sea-island planters kept peace on their plantations at night, although occasionally the planters or their overseers joined in "riding a patrol." No slave was permitted either by law or by plantation regulation to be absent from home without a ticket. While some planters permitted every well behaved slave to have one whenever he requested it, others issued tickets more

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[44] Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 117.

[45] Hall, *Travels in North America*, II, 232.

567 reluctantly. To check upon the comings and goings of the people it was customary to have "list" twice a day on Sunday when the names of all the men were called, from which none was excused except those who were sick or who had tickets. At the evening list "every negro must be clean and well washed."[46]

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

567 797 While it is undoubtedly true that some planters in the early days of the introduction of slave labor into South Carolina were hesitant about allowing their Negroes to become christianized for fear that it might elevate them above their chattel state,[47] by the opening of the antebellum period masters quite generally came to look upon the conversion of the Negroes as one of the justifications of slavery. They not only encouraged the various religious denominations to send missionaries to their slaves, but they often built plantation churches for the special use of the Negroes and permitted their sons and daughters to instruct the slaves from the Bible. Missionaries, appointed by the church but chiefly paid by the planters, preached to the Negroes and catechized them. Ministers prepared special sermons and catechisms for them. Bishop Meade of the Episcopal denomination published his *Sermons, Dialogues and Narratives for servants, to be read to them in families* in Richmond in 1836, and the second edition of Rev. Charles C. Jones' *The Catechism for*

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[46] Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[47] *The South-Carolina Gazette*, March 27, 1742.

"WE [the Grand Jury at Charles Town] present, . . . that, by influence of . . . HUGH BRYAN, Great Bodies of Negroes have Assembled together on Pretence of religious Worship, Contrary to Law, and destructive to the Peace and Safety of the Inhabitants of this Province."

Colored Persons was published in Savannah in 1837. 567
These are only two of many such works published in the 797
South.

The Missionary Society of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist denomination collected for their missions to the Negroes between twelve and fifteen hundred dollars in 1837 and in 1840 reported nineteen missionaries, thirteen missions, 232 plantations administered unto, 5,482 members, and 3,811 children.[48] Very little data can be obtained concerning the activities of the Baptist denomination among the sea-island Negroes, although it is known that more of them adhered to the Baptist faith than to any other. In the summer of 1838 a revival of religion commenced among the Negroes of Liberty County, Georgia, and spread throughout the entire coastal region of South Carolina and Georgia, continuing for two years. During that time the Congregational Church in Liberty County and the Baptist churches throughout the region greatly added to their colored membership.[49]

In addition to the space reserved for slaves in the rear 567
and in the gallery of "Brick Church" on St. Helena Island, 796
practically every plantation had its own "praise house"
where the people held their weekly services. In case the 346
planter provided no separate building, services were held
in the cabin of the religious leader. Miss Towne wrote to 567
a friend shortly after she reached St. Helena Island in 346
1862 that the praise house was "always the cabin of the
oldest person in the village of negro houses."[50] She was

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[48] Charles C. Jones, *The Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the United States*, pp. 82, 83.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

[50] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 20.

567 846 doubtless speaking from a knowledge only of the plantation where she was then residing, for her co-workers have left descriptions of various praise houses on the Island. W. C. Gannett wrote in April, 1862, that the praise house on Pine Grove plantation was "quite a nice little house,—the best on this part of the island."[81] The praise house of Eustis plantation on Ladies Island which their mistress, then living in Massachusetts, had built them was a church indeed.[82]

567 794 796 533 Once, twice, or even three times a week, those who were religiously inclined met at the praise house to sing, pray, and exhort. Edward L. Pierce estimated that about half of the adult Negroes on St. Helena were members of a church.[83] The praise meeting usually opened with a "sperichil" followed by a hymn which the leader "deaconed out" two lines at a time, reading from a well-worn psalm book, if perchance he had learned to read, pretending to read, nevertheless, holding the book nearer the flickering light as if to make out the words, all the while calling out the lines from memory. Cuffy, the leader of the praise house on Pine Grove plantation, always made his own hymns, improvised from hymns of the whites, "praying to de Lord Jedus teach um as he in de woods [to] jine
[782] one word 'ginst t'oder."[84] After another hymn and perhaps a spiritual, the leader would ask for a prayer, then

[81] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 20 n.

[82] See also Wm. Henry Trescot, "Address on Gen. Stephen Elliott, delivered in the House of Representatives of South Carolina, Sept. 8, 1866," p. 5. For many years preceding the War, Rev. Stephen Elliott, father of General Elliott, of Beaufort, "had declined the rectorship of a regular congregation, and, having built a church upon his own plantation, preached regularly and most efficiently to the slaves of the neighborhood."

[83] Pierce, "Report," *Rebellion Record*, sup., I., 305.

[84] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 27.

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read a long passage from the Bible and after another prayer call upon a member to speak.

Edward L. Pierce attended several praise meetings on St. Helena in 1862 and reported that "their exhortations to personal piety were fervent, and though their language was many times confused, at least to my ear, occasionally an important instruction or a felicitous expression could be recognized. In one case, a preacher of their own, commenting on the text, 'Blessed are the meek,' exhorted his brethren not to be 'stout-minded.' "[55]

567 796 535

After another prayer and song the "shout" began.[56] Although the prayer meeting invariably preceded the shout, the members considered the shout a part of their worship, explaining that "it exercise de frame."[57] Pushing the benches back to the wall and perhaps putting another piece of lightwood on the fire in the hearth and on the one which burned red before the door, the worshipers began the recreation which for the church members took the place of the informal dance.

"Old and young, men and women, sprucely-dressed young men, grotesquely half-clad field hands—the women generally with gay handkerchiefs twisted about their heads and with short skirts—boys with tattered shirts and men's trousers, young girls barefooted," wrote Miss Harriet Ware who attended many a shout on St. Helena in the

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[55] Pierce, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

[56] Mr. William Elliott, of Columbia, S. C., a relative of the William Elliott frequently quoted in these pages, states that "the 'shout' is the object of the meeting to which the rest is the introduction." Mr. Elliott speaks from an intimate knowledge of sea-island customs. The shouts, however, which the writer attended on St. Helena Island in 1928 were invariably commenced after the praise meeting had been dismissed.

[57] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 27.

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567 early days of the Civil War, "all stand up in the middle
796 of the floor, and when the 'sperichil' is struck up, begin
first walking and by-and-by shuffling around, one after
535 the other, in a ring. The foot is hardly taken from the
floor, and the progression is mainly due to a jerking, hitching
motion, which agitates the entire shouter, and soon
brings out streams of perspiration. Sometimes they dance
567 silently, sometimes as they shuffle they sing the chorus of
796 the spiritual, and sometimes the song itself is also sung
by the dancers. But more frequently a band, composed of
535 some of the best singers and tired shouters, stand [*sic*]
533 at the side of the room to 'base' the others, singing the
body of the song and clapping their hands together or on
their knees. Song and dance are alike extremely energetic,
and often, when the shout lasts into the middle of the
night, the monotonous thud, thud of the feet prevents
sleep within half a mile of the praise-house."[58]

Miss Towne thought the shout to be "certainly the re-
567 mains of some old idol worship." "I never saw anything
796 so savage," she said. "They call it a religious ceremony,
but it seems more like a regular frolic to me."[59] The
(535) shout was, indeed, a modification of the Negro's regular
dance. After a Negro was converted he no longer at-
567 tended dances in the cabins where "de sinners cross um
797 feet," for the Methodist and Baptist preachers and mis-
535 sionaries taught the slaves that dancing was evil. He went
instead to the praise house where the same dance, recently
177 in vogue today as the "Charleston," was performed, with-

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[58] *Ibid.*, p. 27n; also in *Nation*, May 30, 1867. For other descriptions of shouts on St. Helena Island see *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, pp. 20, 21, 22, 23.

[59] *Letters and Diary*, p. 20.

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out crossing the feet, to the tune of a spiritual. Nor did 567
the Negroes take their violins into the praise houses, for 797
the missionaries also taught them that fiddle music was 535
sinful since the fiddle furnished the tunes for the old [533)
dances. The last violin on St. Helena Island before the [534
Civil War is said to have been owned by a Negro on Coffin's Point, but he got rid of it before "big gun shoot," as the Negroes called the battle of Port Royal.

Sir Charles Lyell observed the same kind of religious worship on the Georgia Sea Islands and mainland. "On the Hopeton plantation above twenty violins have been silenced by the Methodist missionaries," he wrote in 1845. "At the Methodist prayer-meetings, they are permitted [533]
to move rapidly in a ring, joining hands in token of brotherly love, presenting first the right hand and then the left, in which manœuvre, I am told, they sometimes contrive to take enough exercise to serve as a substitute for the dance, it being, in fact, a kind of spiritual *boulanger* [?], while the singing of psalms, in and out of chapel, compensates in no small degree for the songs they have been required to renounce."[80]

The religious life of the slaves was organized by the 567
whites upon the same plan as their own. On plantations 795
of any size, slaves who had joined the church were formed 793
into a class, at the head of which was one of their own number, acting as deacon or leader, who was also sometimes a licensed preacher.[81] The leader who was the head of the praise house often decided in council with his subordinates, the watchmen, whether a candidate for member-

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[80] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 269, 270.

[81] "Negro Slavery at the South," DeBow, *Industrial Resources of the United States*, II, 251.

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567 ship was worthy of admittance. The Reverend Charles C.
795 Jones, after many years spent in preaching to sea-island
793 and mainland slaves concluded that they were inclined to
place true religion in profession, in forms and ordinances,
567 and in excited states of feeling, and true conversion in
795 dreams, visions, trances, and voices, "all bearing a perfect
or striking resemblance to some form or type which has
787 been handed down for generations, or which has been originated in the wild fancy of some religious teacher among them."[62] They offered these dreams and visions to the church sessions as evidences of conversion just as the whites were inclined to do in camp meetings.

567 They were also quick to follow the custom of the
whites in "churching" offending members. "The dis-
795 cipline of colored members," wrote the Reverend Mr.
688 Jones, who, no doubt, had taken part on many such occasions, "is involved, tedious, vexatious and disgusting." Excommunications and suspensions were of "perpetual occurrence, for crimes shocking in character, and of themselves sufficient to show the general state of morals; such for example as adultery, fornication, theft, lying, drunkenness, quarreling, and fighting." The Reverend Mr. Jones thought that the Negroes perverted the gospel and colored their religious practices with their African superstitions. Thus their "doctors, prophets, and conjurers" modified the teachings of the white preachers.[63]

567 The church was not only responsible for giving Chris-
794 tianity to the Negroes, but also to a large extent for teach-
212 ing a few of them to read and write. The early statutes

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[62] Jones, *Religious Instruction of the Negroes*, pp. 125, 126.

[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 127, 128.

against teaching slaves to read had long been in abeyance 567
when Sunday schools began to be organized among them 794
early in the ante-bellum period. Masters usually encouraged 212
their people to attend these Sabbath schools and
often delegated their own children to do the teaching.
The reaction against the Abolition agitation led many
planters to fear the consequence of their people's learning
to read. Accordingly, the Sunday school movement was
largely abandoned after 1835; nevertheless, on every
plantation there were always some slaves who either were
taught to read with the permission of the master or who
picked up the knowledge clandestinely. Miss Towne
found on St. Helena Island in 1862 a cabinet maker, Will
Capers, who could read and write and who hoped the
Government would pay him for teaching his fellows. He [871]
told her that he conducted a secret night school for men
during plantation days.[64] Nevertheless, it was unusual [802]
for a slave to know his letters, and most of them could
not count beyond, "one, two, five, eight, ten."[65]

For the most part, sea-island planters found their laborers 567
mild and forgiving, quick to start a quarrel, but as 181
quick to forget it. Sir Charles Lyell thought that there 157
were more broken heads among the Irish in a few years
when they came to dig the Brunswick Canal than had been
known among the coastal Negroes for half a century.[66]
They were a good natured, happy people, making the most
of their lot, forgetting the work of the day in their hours
of "pleasuring."

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[64] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 27.

[65] Towne, "Pioneer Work on the Sea Islands," *Southern Workman*, July, 1901. Miss Towne, however, could not have come in contact with the house servants, but only with the field hands.

[66] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 266.

175 General W. T. Sherman, in command of the "Expeditionary Corps" arriving at Port Royal, as this region was now to be called, on the fleet in command of Captain DuPont, described in two official reports conditions as he found them after the battle:

> The effect of this victory is startling. Every white inhabitant has left the island. The wealthy islands of Saint Helena, Ladies, and most of Port Royal are abandoned by the whites, and the beautiful estates of the planters, with all their immense property, left to the pillage of hordes of apparently disaffected blacks.
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> The surrounding country evacuated by the whites, as described in my last, has upon it an abundance of valuable property, including ungathered crops and cotton mostly gathered. I have directed all the means of transportation, such as boats, scows, wagons, &c., to be collected for the use of the Army; but in regard to other private property, such as can be made of no injury to us in the operations of the enemy, I have directed not to be interfered with. This, however, is a difficult matter, and there exists too great a propensity to rob and pillage the houses and plantations left in charge only of the blacks.[3]

175 •567 Later Hazard Stevens who also witnessed as an officer of the Federal Army the capture of Port Royal attributed much of the looting to the Negroes whom he de-

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"The facts are briefly these. So soon as it was understood by the St. Helena Company that a retreat of our forces from Bay Point might become necessary, every hand was employed and every individual busied in gathering together the flats and boats from every quarter of the Island. This duty was rendered doubly arduous by the unwillingness displayed by some of the negroes, who shrunk from executing the order from fear, and in many instances secreted themselves at the appointed time. So excited and disorganized had they become from fear inspired by the terrible cannonading only three miles distant from their point of rendezvous, that it was found necessary to have the flats, as they were manned, each superintended by a member of our little company, who were instructed to make an example of the first rebellious negro who hesitated to row."

[3] *Official Records*, ser. I, vol. VI, serial no. 6, pp. 6, 188.

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scribed as being in "the densest ignorance, some of them the blackest human beings ever seen, and others the most bestial in appearance." "These ignorant and benighted creatures flocked into Beaufort on the hegira of the whites," wrote Stevens, "and held high carnival in the deserted mansions, smashing doors, mirrors, and furniture, and appropriating all that took their fancy. After this loot, a common sight was a black wench dressed in silks, or white lace curtains, or a stalwart black field hand resplendent in a complete suit of gaudy carpeting just torn from the floor. After this sack, they remained at home upon the plantations, and reveled in unwonted idleness and luxury, feasting upon the corn, cattle, and turkeys of their fugitive masters."[4]

The Negroes were inclined to hold aloof from the invading army. They had been told by their masters that the enemy was likely to seize them and carry them off to Cuba. They, who were accustomed to look upon persons even from neighboring islands as "foreigners," were startled by the presence of so many white persons. The officers had expected to put the Negroes to work at once in getting ready the new camps, after the example of General Butler, who had earlier captured Hampton Roads and solved his labor problem and the status of the Negro simultaneously by declaring the slaves contraband of war. But, after the army had been at Port Royal more than a month, the Negroes still were suspicious. A great many would come in to watch the operations of the white soldiers, bringing with them wives and children, but when work was suggested most of them would again take to the

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[4] Stevens, *Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, pp. 354, 355.

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woods and the swamps, often leaving their families to be fed by the army.[5] By February, 1862, however, 600 Negroes had collected at the Federal camp at Hilton Head.

The Negroes on the islands more remote from Beaufort and Hilton Head quite generally remained on their respective plantations under the direction of the drivers who still held the keys to the corn-houses. With the same sense of responsibility that they felt before their masters fled, they dealt out rations and directed the work of the field hands. In one instance a Federal agent was called upon to settle a dispute between a driver and a field hand, as being the only white man to whom an appeal might be made. The driver was refusing the hand his peck of corn because he had been absent visiting his wife on a neighboring plantation when the corn was gathered, the work having been done after "gun shoot," as the Negroes termed the battle of Port Royal. The hand protested that he had helped to plant and hoe the corn and had been absent when it was gathered only because of sickness. Upon this evidence the agent advised the driver to deal out the peck, and the driver promptly did so.

The St. Helena Negroes seem to have had little part in the looting of their masters' houses. They were accustomed to the absence of their owners and to seeing the "big house" closed many months during the year. They could not believe, as the soldiers told them, that their masters were gone for good. After a while they did begin to take a few simple articles such as sugar and soap,[6] and

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[5] *Official Records*, ser. I, vol. VI, serial no. 6, p. 202.

[6] Their attitude is in striking contrast to that of the Combahee River Negroes who usually to a man went off with the Federal Army when a raid was made up the River. On one such occasion, seventy-three Negroes on the plantation where

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later, when they saw the soldiers entering the houses, they also took pieces of furniture, but by far the greater portion of valuables was taken by the soldiers and Government agents.

THE PROBLEM OF THE CONQUERING ARMY

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When the Federal Army captured Port Royal, it found that it had also taken possession of some ten thousand Negroes who might be "contraband of war," but whose status was doubtful, nevertheless. They could not be treated as northern laborers, put to work at the camps, and then ignored. It was even possible that the Army might in the last extremity have to feed and clothe them. But in the meantime there were valuable provisions for the Army on the plantations and valuable crops in the fields which could not be left to the uncertain course of the Negroes.

One of the first orders to the troops was to collect boats and mules for transportation service and corn and cattle for the commissary. Edward L. Pierce later reported that the Army had taken nearly all the corn from Ladies Island, hoping that the surplus on St. Helena would be sufficient to feed the Negroes of both islands, and from all the plantations it had taken the workable mules and horses and many of the oxen, which they slaughtered for beef, sometimes killing as many as "fifty or more head on a plantation."[7]

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two Federal boats anchored aided in the destruction of their own and three neighboring plantations. They set fire to the "big house," containing a library of 3,500 volumes, to the steam threshing mill, rice barn, corn house, kitchen, storeroom, mule stable, and three Negro houses. They put on board 6,000 bushels of rice from the plantation barn and then, with their clothing tied in bundles and with their chickens and pigs squealing a protest, climbed on the vessels to the last woman and child. See *Charleston Mercury*, June 19, 1863.

[7] Pierce, "Second Report," *Rebellion Records*, sup., I, p. 319.

175 To the Treasury Department, the War Department
569 turned over the task of collecting and selling the cotton.
For this purpose, Secretary Chase hastily appointed certain
659 men whom he called cotton agents to direct the work of the Negroes. William H. Reynolds, lieutenant colonel of the First Regiment of Rhode Island Artillery, was appointed resident agent and placed in charge of the cotton agents. His motives appear to have been superior to those of many who worked under him. In making a report on the progress of work to Secretary Chase the first of the year he wrote:

> I find on most of the Plantations corn, and Sweet Potatoes, in sufficient quantities to support the Negroes.
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> I have made arrangements to furnish them with salt, molasses & other small stores in moderate quantities deducting the cost of these articles from the amt due them for labor.
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> . . . I find it is impossible to hire the Negroes by the day, on many of the Plantations, & have authorized my clerks to allow them a dollar for every four hundred pounds of stone cotton which they deliver at the steamboat landing, paying them partly in
> & the bal in Clothing & Provisions—[8]

Edward L. Pierce, a special agent for the Treasury Department, who arrived at Port Royal a few weeks after the cotton agents, found some of them practicing "a reign of terror over the Negroes." One of them, a carpenter from New York City, had the "profoundest contempt" for his laborers.[9] Others also wrote of the dubious practices of the cotton agents. "Mr. Whiting has not been a Government agent for two months," Miss Towne wrote indignantly in 1862, "and yet he lives in Government

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[8] Port Royal Correspondence. Wm. H. Reynolds to S. P. Chase, Jan. 1, 1862.

[9] *Ibid.*, Edward L. Pierce to S. P. Chase, March 30, 1862.

property, making the negroes work without pay for him 175
and living upon 'the fat of the lamb,'—selling too, the 567
sugar, etc., at rates most wicked, such as brown sugar, 657
twenty-five cents a pound; using Government horses and carriages, furniture, corn, garden vegetables, etc. It is too bad. The cotton agents, many of them, are doing this."[10]

While the cotton agents promised wages to the laborers, they were slow to pay, for the Department expected the fund arising from the sale of cotton to take care of the expense of picking it. The difficulty in getting the Negroes to work, together with the difficulty in getting the cotton ginned and to the New York market, added to the delay. The agents had expected to bale the cotton on the plantations, but the Negroes had quite generally broken up the gins so that most of it had to be sent to New York for this purpose. Consequently, it was April, 1862, before the Negroes received any pay for their labor, and then some of it was in orders on the agents' stores where prices were high. Consequently, the Government was facing general discontent and uneasiness among the Negroes only a few months after having taken them under its protection.

At the time that the Treasury Department was assigned the task of marketing the cotton, it was also given jurisdiction over the operation of the plantations and, consequently, the general welfare of the laborers on them. As early as January 15, 1862, General Sherman had applied to headquarters for authority to put into operation

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[10] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, pp. 55, 61. See also pp. 16, 17, 66, 67.

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175 567 657 a plan for the superintendence of agriculture and education within his department. He wrote to the adjutant-general on this date:

> For the future maintenance of these people some system must be established, and one which will permit them to sustain themselves; but before they can be left entirely to their own government they must be trained and instructed into a knowledge of personal responsibility—which will be a matter of time. I have, therefore, the honor to recommend that suitable instructors be sent to them, to teach them all the necessary rudiments of civilization and secondly, and in the meantime, that agents, properly qualified, be employed and sent here to take charge of plantations and superintend the work of the blacks until they are sufficiently enlightened to think and provide for themselves. They should receive wages, and the profits of the plantations, after all expenses are paid, should go to the Government. I can see no other way to lay a groundwork for future usefulness with this unfortunate class of people.[11]

The next month General Sherman issued an order appealing to the benevolent people of the land "in behalf of the helpless blacks of South Carolina within the limits of his command."[12]

When the Treasury assumed the responsibility of the Negro, Secretary Chase had in mind some such plan as Sherman had already suggested. It occurred to Chase that here was an opportunity to test the ability of the Negro to exercise freedom in case it were eventually given him. Under a fostering benevolence, the Negro was to be given the chance of revealing his capabilities. Out of the battle of Port Royal there gradually arose in the minds of those in the North the scheme for a great social experi-

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[11] *Official Records*, ser. I, vol. VI, serial no. 6, p. 218.

[12] *House Ex. Doc. No. 142*, 41st Cong. 2d Sess.

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ment which would form some basis for a decision concerning the status which the Negro should be given after the war.

To put some such scheme in operation the Department chose Edward L. Pierce, a young abolitionist of Boston who had studied in Chase's law office. He had been at Hampton, Virginia, and after he was mustered out of military service in July, 1861, went to Washington where he had occasion to relate some of his recent experiences with the Negroes to Secretary Chase. This fact together with their personal friendship was perhaps responsible for the Secretary's sending Pierce, then practicing law in Boston, a wire December 21, 1861: "If you incline to visit Beaufort in connection with contrabands and cotton, come to Washington at once."[13] On the twenty-fifth Pierce conferred with Chase and, on January 13, 1862, left New York City for Beaufort to make an investigation of social conditions among the Negroes under the temporary appointment as special agent for the Treasury Department.

Pierce found the "contrabands" discontented with the treatment they had received at the hands of the cotton agents and the Army. They were suspicious and reticent. When asked if they desired to be free, they would often answer, "De vite man do w'at he pleases wit' us. We yunnah niggers now, Massa."[14] But, concluded Pierce, "in spite of their condition, reputed to be worse here than in many other parts of the rebellious region, there are such features in their life and character, that the opportunity is now offered to us to make of them, partially in

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[13] Pierce, *Addresses and Papers*, p. 54.

[14] Pierce, "Report," *Rebellion Record*, sup., I, 308.

175 567 657 this generation, and fully in the next, a happy, industrious law-abiding, free and Christian people, if we have but the courage and patience to accept it.”[18] Whereupon he outlined a plan to the Secretary by which he thought this ideal might be realized.

He was much opposed to the plan of leasing the plantations with the people upon them to the highest bidder, as the cotton agents had recommended. Instead, he would propose a system of superintendents of plantations whereby certain men, carefully chosen for the position, should be appointed to manage the cultivation of the plantations, their chief object being “to promote the moral and intellectual culture of the wards” and “to prepare them for useful and worthy citizenship.” The superintendents, who were to be selected “as carefully as one would choose a guardian for his children,” were to have complete authority on their respective plantations subject only to a director-general. The superintendents were to be compensated by a good salary, say $1,000, and the laborers by a standard wage graduated by the wants of the laborers and the ability of the Government to pay, this ability to be determined by the profits arising from the cultivation of the plantations. He thought, however, that the Government should be able to allow rations and 40 cents a day.

As a part of the plan, Pierce advised the Government to send missionaries “to address the religious element of a race so emotional in their nature” and teachers to instruct the laborers in reading, writing, and arithmetic. For the

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[18] *Ibid.*, p. 310.

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salaries of these persons, Pierce thought that the Government could rely upon private benevolence.[16]

While Pierce's "Report to the Secretary of the Treasury," of February 3, 1862, which at once received wide publication, was for the most part enthusiastically received in the North, there were some who thought that he went too far in presuming upon the Negro's ultimate citizenship. Even his personal friends in Congress refused to support the plan, and President Lincoln did not wish to be troubled with "such details"; for, so Pierce thought, he approached the great question of the status of the Negro "slowly and reluctantly."[17] Chase seems to have been well pleased with the report and at once put it in operation.[18] In looking about for the proper person to put this difficult and important experiment into effect, it was natural that the Secretary should choose the father of the plan.

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Although the Department had adopted the plan of superintendents, it had no funds with which to pay them. At this critical stage the Educational Commission, organized in Boston February 7, 1862, and the Freedman's Relief Association, organized in New York on the twentieth of the same month, volunteered to pay both superintend-

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[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 311, 312.

[17] Pierce, *Addresses and Papers*, p. 65.

[18] *Official Records*, ser. III, vol. II, serial no. 123, p. 55. The authority by which the Treasury Department assumed the responsibilities outlined in the report was based upon the Act of July 13, 1861, by which the President was authorized to permit commercial intercourse with any part of the country in a state of insurrection under such rules and regulations as might be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. The act authorized the Secretary to appoint the officers needed to carry into effect such permits, rules, and regulations. President Lincoln sanctioned the enterprise in a note to Pierce, February 15, 1862, and the War Department approved the plans in an order to General Sherman which he made a part of General Orders, No. 17.

lives in this region of malaria and typhoid, to train the 175
Negro for citizenship.[21] While some refused to accept 657
any remuneration, others served at from $30 to $50 a
month, only one receiving as high as $100, a doctor on
North Edisto. All, however, took their quarters in the
deserted houses of the planters and received soldiers' rations from the Government.

In two weeks after their arrival each superintendent 175
and teacher had been assigned a post and was at work, 657
but his task was overwhelming. Stirred up by the care- 567
less and conflicting talk of the soldiers, victimized by the
cotton agents, the Negroes were unwilling pupils. "We 464
found them a herd of suspicious savages," wrote Edward

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[21] MS in Treasury Department on superintendents and teachers for Port Royal. Those first appointed to plantations on St. Helena Island were as follows: Edward W. Hooper, of Boston, 22 years old, graduate of Harvard, served without compensation, teacher and superintendent at Pope's plantation; Edward S. Philbrick, of Brookline, Mass., 34 years old, railroad engineer and architect, received no compensation, superintendent at Coffin's Point; William C. Gannett, of Boston, 22 years old, divinity student, no compensation the first month, superintendent and teacher with Philbrick at Coffin's Point; James H. Palmer, of Southampton, N. H., 25 years old, medical student, assistant superintendent and teacher at Coffin's Frogmore plantation, $30 a month; David F. Thorpe, of Providence, R. I., student at Brown University, 25 years old, superintendent at Oliver Fripp's plantation, $40 a month; Dr. Adoniram Judson Wakefield, of Boston, 38 years old, physician, located on Thomas B. Fripp's plantation, medical attendant of Negroes in that section, $50 a month; T. Edwin Ruggles, of Milton, Mass., 24 years old, graduate of Yale, farmer, superintendent at Rev. Richard Fuller's plantation, $50 a month; Richard Soule, Sr., 49 years old, civil engineer and teacher, superintendent at Coffin's Frogmore, $50 a month; Dr. Charles H. Brown, of Boston, 45 years old, physician, medical attendant for Negroes in vicinity of Pope's plantation, $40 a month; William E. Park, of Andover, Mass., 24 years old, graduate of Yale, superintendent at Capt. Oliver Fripp's plantation, compensation undetermined; James E. Taylor, of Andover, Mass., 23 years old, student, superintendent and teacher at Dr. Jenkin's plantation, compensation undetermined; Samuel D. Phillips, of Boston, 23 years old, medical student and graduate of Harvard, nephew of Wendell Phillips, superintendent at Dr. Pope's plantation, $30 a month; George M. Wells, of Providence, R. I., 20 years old, clerk, teacher, plantation undetermined, salary undetermined; Robert N. Smith, of New York, 46 years old, superintendent at one of Dr. Jenkins' plantations, salary undetermined.

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S. Philbrick, a prosperous engineer and architect who had left his home in Brookline, Massachusetts, to serve without remuneration in this social experiment, contributing himself $1,000 to the cause.[22] The superintendents generally had five or six plantations in charge, and, sometimes, with the assistance of a teacher, had as many as 500 Negroes to supervise. The superintendents found their laborers in need of clothes and implements, for the battle of Port Royal had occurred a few weeks before the customary time to issue winter clothes, and hoes were never given out until February. Moreover, the planting season had already advanced six weeks before the superintendents assumed charge of their respective plantations. In addition to these handicaps, they had to learn something about the methods of agriculture which they were supposed to oversee.

In every case the superintendent found it necessary to lean heavily upon the plantation driver for information and assistance and to follow the system of plantation management already established by the former owners. The driver was instructed to go about his accustomed work, stake off each hand's task as before, and manage the details of planting. The Negroes had already begun putting their own patches into corn, but they were reluctant to plant cotton, and it took much artful persuasion to induce them to do so. Thus, while the provision crop on St. Helena for 1862 was about the same as in ante-bellum times, the cotton crop fell far short. The cotton crops from both St. Helena and Ladies islands amounted to only $40,000.[23]

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[22] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 181.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

The new system of labor differed from the plantation 175
management of the ante-bellum regime in two important 657
particulars. The lash, under no circumstance, was to be 567
used in obtaining discipline, and the laborers were to be 464
paid for their work. The money, however, was slow to [465)
come, and the hands worked for six weeks or more on short rations and promises. On some islands, which had been entirely stripped of provisions by the Army, the Negroes received Government rations, but St. Helena Island was considered to have ample provisions to feed the laborers. "They are crying loudly & and with some reason, that we don't treat them so well as their old masters," wrote Philbrick to Pierce. 'They have no *salt* [,] no molasses, sugar or fresh meat. They see the soldiers kill their cattle & sit in idleness (as it seems to them) while their masters gave them a beef once a month & an allowance of the other luxuries. They consider tobacco a necessity, but can't get it at any price."[24]

They were unmindful of the fact that the Treasury Department was spending money to equip the plantations with seeds, implements, and mules, for in slavery days the planters had done this and fed them too. By the middle of May, the Department had forwarded Pierce $10,000 to pay for labor and had spent $15,000 for implements, seeds, and mules, having purchased and sent to
Port Royal ninety mules and ten horses.[25] Early in May [465
Pierce made the first payment to his laborers, $1 an acre

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[24] Port Royal Correspondence, E. S. Philbrick to E. L. Pierce.

[25] *Official Records*, ser. III, vol. II, serial no. 123, p. 55. This was actually a very small amount for the purpose when it is considered that the Department was fostering the cultivation of some 13,795 acres. See Pierce, "Second Report," *Rebellion Record*, sup. I, 318.

175 for all cotton planted, distributed among them according
657 to the amount done by each, a very small sum, they
•567 thought, for listing, planting, and hoeing. Pierce had
464 planned to pay the Negroes for their work a little at a
465 time, hoping to make them see that it was to their interest
to tend the cotton after it was planted, but they were
slow to grasp the significance of wages.[28]

Plantation work was further interrupted and the suspicion
175 of the Negroes further aroused by an unexpected
657 order from Major-General David Hunter, commanding
567 the Department of the South, for the collection of all Negroes
464 on the plantations between eighteen and forty-five
able to bear arms, who were to be sent forthwith to the
702 camp at Hilton Head. Pierce protested against the order as being contrary to the President's intentions and the instructions of the Treasury Department, and he was finally able to obtain the exemption of the drivers and a promise of the return of all those who were unwilling to bear arms. Nevertheless, he lost 600 laborers by this conscription and forfeited the confidence of many who were left behind.

The confusion resulting from the order disorganized
175 the whole system, for it discouraged the superintendents
657 and antagonized the Negroes. In most instances, the Negroes
567 were taken from the fields without being permitted
to go home for so much as a jacket, the soldiers, however,
702 sometimes allowing wives and children to fetch a few necessary articles. On some plantations the wailing and screaming were loud and prolonged, and the women threw

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[28] Pierce, "Second Report," p. 320; *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 18.

themselves in despair upon the ground, while on other 175
plantations where the news had leaked out, the men took 657
to the woods and the marshes, and had to be hunted down 562)
by the soldiers.[27] [902)

In June, 1862, the "experiment" was transferred 175
from the Treasury to the War Department, and Brigadier- 657
General Rufus Saxton placed in command with instruc- 241
tions to take possession of abandoned plantations and to make rules and regulations for the cultivation of the land.[28] Pierce was offered a place on his staff with the rank of colonel, but forseeing, no doubt, that the plan of the experiment was soon to be altered, he declined the appointment. General Saxton was, from the first, sympathetic with the Negro and honestly attempted to carry out the spirit of Pierce's plan, but he was constantly annoyed and prevented from doing so by those who were not.

General Saxton inherited the confusion which Pierce had found harmful to the successful cultivation of the plantations and which in his brief command he was unable to overcome. The superintendents at once besieged him with requests to make some change in the plan of management before another planting season, but he was slow to take up the matter. In the autumn Charles P. Ware, in despair, wrote to a friend, "We need people at headquarters who understand the details of plantation work. . . . There is a general want of concerted system on all the places. Each superintendent has to do as he thinks best in all cases himself. General plans are usually determined on just too late."[29] It was more imperative than

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[27] *Official Records*, ser. III, vol. II, serial no. 123, pp. 52-60.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 152, 153.

[29] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 93.

In February, 1863, the Government began to sell the conquered territory at auction for the Federal direct tax levied by the Act of August 5, 1861. Some of the land was sold to private individuals and some was bid in by the United States for naval and military purposes and some for "school farms," the profits from which were to be applied to the education of the Negro, now declared free by Act of Congress, July 17, 1862,[33] and by virtue of the President's proclamation of January 1, 1863.

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In 1864 all Government plantations were leased to white superintendents. After rejecting in 1862 the plan of the cotton agents to rent out the plantations, the Government had come two years later to accept it. But General Saxton, still the director of "freedmen's affairs," did not propose to stand by and see the Negro abused. In April, 1864, he issued a circular requiring all superintendents of plantations, whether of government or private ownership, to file a signed statement with their general superintendents setting forth the terms of the agreement existing between themselves and their laborers. The general superintendent was then ordered to visit the plantation, explain the contract to the Negroes, and affix to it the names of all who agreed to the terms. Any laborer who objected to them was warned to leave his employer or to stay at his own risk.[34]

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In many instances, the general superintendents encouraged the teachers to lease the school farms and permitted them to do so free of rent, provided that they live on the plantation and teach the children of their "dis-

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[33] *U. S. Statutes at Large*, XII, 591. Congress declared free all slaves of rebel masters on places occupied by the United States forces, or escaping thereto.

[34] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 262n.

175 ered extravagance. They lived better, clothed themselves
433 better, and worked fewer hours than in slavery days, but
511 they had not yet crystallized themselves into industrious
and orderly communities.

WAS FREEDOM TOO EASY?

175 In 1865 Philbrick had not yet sold all of his eleven plantations. Besides his holdings, there were several other plantations on St. Helena owned and operated by men from the North. The Government, too, was still leasing the school farms to white overseers. Most of these men, employers of Negro labor, superintendents and teachers who had witnessed the transition from slavery to freedom, were of the opinion that freedom had been made too easy for the Negro.

Charles P. Ware, who had been an assistant superin-
175 tendent under Philbrick for the Government and later re-
567 mained on St. Helena to help Philbrick carry through his
657 scheme of training the Negro for citizenship with private
funds, wrote in despair at the beginning of the harvest
181 season, the first year of emancipation, "The untrustworthiness of these people is more apparent and troublesome than ever. I feel as if it would not be safe to allow them to gin the cotton—it seems certain that a great deal of it would be stolen." He then set down the characteristics of the Negroes which made it so difficult to deal with them as laborers: "Their skill in lying, their great reticence, their habit of shielding one another (generally by silence), their invariable habit of taking a rod when you, after much persuasion, have been induced to grant an inch, their assumed innocence and ignorance of the simplest rules of

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
St. Helena Island

meum and *tuum*, joined with amazing impudence in mak- 175
ing claims,—these are the traits which try us continually 567
in our dealings with them, and sometimes almost make us 657
despair of their improvement—at least, in the present gen- 181
eration. It is certain that their freedom has been too easy for them,—they have not had a hard enough time of it. In many cases they have been 'fair spoiled.'"[8]

Arthur Sumner, who had come to St. Helena in 1862 175
as a teacher, seriously questioned the wisdom of the Gov- 657
ernment's policy toward the Negro in the early days of the Federal occupation of Port Royal and came finally in 1865 to believe that the Negroes' friends at the North had done the freedmen a grave injustice by protecting them against "natural economic laws." He wrote from St. Helena in February, 1865:

> I am exasperated (and so is every other white man in this place) at the mischievous indulgence shown to the negro. It is a common remark here, that "a white man can get no justice." This inhumane leniency is doing a great deal of harm, in many ways. It is teaching them to despise the laws, and to believe that Liberty means License. It is creating in the minds of the white people a very bitter feeling against the blacks, which, of course, is mutual. If Justice had been shown to both parties, from the beginning there would, I believe, have been far less antagonism. There will always be, however, until the blacks are as intelligent and well-educated as the whites, a contempt felt by the latter, and dislike and distrust by the former. It is so here and must be so everywhere. The negro has always been oppressed by the white man, and knows that even now he has it in his power, from his superior intelligence and acquirements, to cheat him. Even the best of the young men sent down here by benevolent societies at the North, have failed to gain their confidence. . . . The Black has got a long struggle before

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[8] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 287.

872 (175) grades. The school was equipped with blackboards, charts, and maps, and in most cases provided the pupils with books and slates. After Miss Towne's death in 1901, Miss Murray carried on the work of the school until 1904 when Miss Rossa B. Cooley and Miss Grace B. House, teachers at Hampton Institute in Virginia, took over the work, and the curriculum was enlarged to include industrial and agricultural training similar to that offered by Hampton.

527 (461) (567) As in slavery the laborer had stopped work at noon Saturday and declared a holiday until Monday morning, so did the freedman. Saturday afternoon saw the island roads lined with pedestrians and carts, for each head of the family, regardless of where he lived, felt that he must pay a visit to "Corner Store" or even go to Beaufort. Saturday night was the time for general merriment, a dance for non-church members, a sing or a shout for those who were. 175 527 Miss Towne complained in 1876 that on Frogmore plantation where she lived the people were beginning to have parties on other nights of the week as well. "Last night," she wrote, "our boys went to a party again, and to-day they are sleeping it out. We have issued the edict, 'No more parties this winter,' for there is arising among the Frogmore young men a constant desire for gayety,—suppers, etc., that we intend to begin to frown upon. They (273) are flush just now, and are spending too much. They are all temperance parties, which is one good thing."[32]

574 527 175 Although there were occasions when people from all parts of the Island assembled together, as on Saturday afternoons at Corner Store, at church on Sunday mornings,

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[32] *Letters and Diary*, p. 257.

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
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527 Decoration Day was the one occasion of the year when all of St. Helena paid a visit to Beaufort, where there was always a ceremony at National Cemetery. "The Thirtieth of May," said a native of St. Helena, born in the early days of freedom, "was a day that I looked for [*sic*] to happiness. Early in the morning work was suspended and nearly all the people on the Island went to Beaufort. I can now recall how I used to watch with interest the great crowd that used to pass by our house from the other end of the Island on the eve of Decoration in order to be over [505] in town before the rush. We had to cross a ferry then and the accommodation was not very good."[84]

● [567] The people of St. Helena celebrated the First of January not so much as New Year's Day as the anniversary of their freedom, for it was January 1, 1863, that President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation. Here again the celebration was at Corner Store. Brass bands, perhaps one hired for the occasion and another composed of members of one of the fraternal orders, furnished music for the day. On a platform erected in a grove of trees, speakers, usually chosen from among their own people, addressed an attentive audience upon the benefits arising from freedom.

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517 The freedmen had no sports as did the whites in the rural districts. They still fished as in slavery days and could now hunt when they chose, but they did not know how to play together in combative sports. Yet they were
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181 a good-natured, contented people, happy in their freedom, ignorant in their isolation, suspicious of all "foreigners," but gentle and courteous when once this suspicion had been

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[84] MS, "St. Helena." In files of Penn School.